DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 255 771 CE 041 334

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TITLE Competency-Based Teacher Education Workshops in CBE/ESL.
INSTITUTION Arlington County Public Schools, Va.
SPONS AGENCY Virginia State Dept. of Education, Richmond.
PUB DATE Jun 84
NOTE 153p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adult Basic Education; Adult Programs; Behavioral Objectives; *Competency Based Education; Competency Based Teacher Education; Educational Planning; Educational Resources; *English (Second Language); Guidelines; Inservice Teacher Education; Learning Modules; Lesson Plans; Needs Assessment; Postsecondary Education; Refugees; *Second Language Instruction; Student Evaluation; *Teaching Methods; *Workshops

ABSTRACT

This document contains five modules for presenting a series of workshops on competency-based education (CBE) to teachers of English as a second language (ESL). Each module consists of the following: competency sheet (including rationale, performance objective, and enabling objectives), background notes and resources, suggested format for a three-hour workshop, activities with handouts, a review activity, and a workshop evaluation form. The modules cover the following topics: (1) competency-based education and the adult learner; (2) needs assessment and language functions, (3) writing competency-based objectives, (4) planning instruction, and (5) evaluating student performance. An overview of the workshop series and instructions for conducting the workshops are also included in the manual. (KC)

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COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION WORKSHOPS IN CBE/ESL

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CE041334

Funds to develop this manual were provided through Section 310 of the Adult Education Act (Public Law 91-230) and granted by the Virginia State Department of Education. The content of this manual does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Virginia State Department of Education or the United States Department of Education.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

There are over 19,000 refugees in the State of Virginia. Seventy-five percent of them live in Alexandria, Arlington, and Fairfax. The rest are scattered throughout the state, some in communities where there are no other non-native English speakers. The main goal of the resettlement agencies who place these refugees is to get them employed. To find and maintain employment, refugees need basic life skills and survival, work, and social language skills that will enable them to function in the community and on the job.

In the more populous areas, programs have been funded to assist refugees improve their skills and find jobs. At present, these programs are experiencing major reductions in funding allocations and are, therefore, not able to service the needs of the total refugee population. More and more refugees are seeking assistance from county ABE/ESL programs which already serve a highly diverse population and are, for the most part, feeling ill-prepared to deal with the refugees' specialized language needs. In other parts of the state, ESL programs are being organized where there were none before, and there is a need to provide in-service training to teachers and volunteers who may have limited experience teaching ESL.

The trend in refugee education has been to apply competency-based education (CBE) to language teaching. CBE instruction begins while the refugees attend ESL classes in the camps overseas, but this approach is not adequately used stateside. This is truly regrettable, since CBE has its roots in the Adult Performance Level studies[1] and has great potential for wider application in a variety of language instruction settings. CBE/ESL is appropriate for all adult learners, from the diplomat's wife to the recently arrived refugee farmer. These learners are united in the ESL classroom by their motivation to learn English to meet specific needs in their lives. Adult learning theory suggests that this need is, indeed, the basis for adult learning. Adults want to learn something useful and if they succeed, they will continue to learn. CBE is a process which assesses student needs and then sets realistic goals for students to meet those needs.

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[1]Adult Performance (APL) project, funded in the 1970's by USOE, identified the skills necessary for an adult to function successfully in today's society. For more information, contact Jim Cates, Director, APL Project, University of Texas, Austin, Texas 78712.

CBE is also consistent with current linguistic theory on the teaching of language, with emphasis on a communicative approach. This approach is characterized by actively involving the learner, organizing instruction according to purpose, providing meaningful contexts, teaching realistic language, and reviewing/recycling material. CBE/ESL is a departure from traditional ESL instruction because it is based on learners' needs and provides a process for integrating the development of basic and language skills with the learners' past experiences, goals, and aspirations. Role-relevant instructional focus is greatly needed in ABE/ESL programs, which traditionally have been loosely structured because of the diverse nature and composition of the student population.

A survey of ABE/ESL teachers in northern Virginia revealed that the majority of teachers were faced with multi-level classes and had neither a program curriculum nor required instructional materials. Teachers practiced most standard ESL techniques but very few held strong commitment to any particular approach. Only 20% expressed familiarity with the concept of CBE. However, they expressed interest and desire for staff development opportunities that would help them alleviate the problems of multi-level classes and better meet the needs of their students.

The Virginia State Department of Education awarded a grant under Section 310 of the Adult Education Act (P.L. 91-230) to the Refugee Education and Employment Program, Arlington, to promote the wider application of CBE/ESL throughout the state. This manual is the result of two series of workshops held in northern Virginia during Fall 1983 and Spring 1984. These workshops provided ABE/ESL teachers with training in applying CBE/ESL to their own classrooms. The training was conducted using a competency-based teacher education (CBTE) approach. It was the goal of the workshops that by experiencing CBE themselves, teachers would realize that CBE is not a revolution, but a refocusing of teaching toward meeting the needs of students in their life roles.

The Modules

Development

A competency-based approach was used to develop the workshop training modules. First, the ABE/ESL teachers who signed up to attend the workshop series were surveyed to ascertain their needs with respect to CBE/ESL instruction. (See Appendix for sample questionnaire on CBE.) Based on this needs assessment and a review of current literature on implementing CBE and CBTE, a list of competencies was compiled of the skills teachers should possess in order to apply CBE in their ESL classrooms. This list was then sent for review to experienced teachers/admininstrators in the field.[2]

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[2]Autumn Keltner, Director ABE/ESL, San Diego Community College District, California. Joann La Perla, Director, Evening, Weekend, Summer and Off-Campus Programs, Union County College, NJ. Lynn Savage, Curriculum Specialist, San Francisco Community College District, CA.

Instructional and evaluation activities were designed which would enable participants to achieve the competencies. These activities were field-tested in the first series of workshops. Revisions were made and the series was repeated.

Participants in the workshop series came voluntarily from different school systems and different programs within each system. The first fifteen-hour series was offered two evenings a week for two and one-half weeks. The second series was held on five consecutive Saturday mornings. Having the workshops once a week allowed the participants time to process what they had learned and to experiment with new ideas in their classes between workshop sessions.

Organization

In CBTE it is important that the competencies be made known to the participants in advance of the training and that the criteria for evaluation be clearly stated. The Overview Section contains a list of the competencies for the entire training series as well as a self-rating form and a list of annotated resources for additional information on module topics.

Each module consists of the following:

Competency Sheet. The competency for the module is followed by a rationale which explains the importance of the competency to CBE. The performance objective represents how achievement of the competency will be measured. The enabling objectives represent the skills that participants need in order to master the competency.

Background Notes. The background information is to be used by the trainer in preparing presentations for the workshops. The resource list represents further works to be consulted.

Suggested Format. The suggested format provides an outline of the three-hour module workshop, including approximate times for activities, a brief description of activities, and a list of handouts for participants. References are made to activity instructions and handouts.

Activities. Instructions for the trainer are provided, along with activity worksheets when required. Handouts for participants are designated by a letter/number found in the upper right-hand corner.

Review Activity. The review activity sheet and instructions for the trainer represent how achievement of the competency will be evaluated. The review activities should be rated on the following basis:

O	=	Criteria are not met. Response is unsatisfatory.
✓	=	Criteria are met. Response is satisfactory.
+	=	Criteria are met. Response is good.

Workshop Evaluation. A form is provided for participants to complete at the end of each workshop. At the end of the entire series, participants are asked to fill out a workshop series evaluation as well.

The Workshops

Format

Each workshop begins with the reading of the competency sheet which lists the competency, rationale, performance objective, and enabling objectives for that module. By reading this sheet, participants find out what they are responsible for learning during each workshop.

Each workshop consists of a presentation by the trainer, handouts, and activities which may be completed alone, with partners, or in small groups. This is dependent on the nature of the activity and the size of the group.

Each module has a review activity based on the competency/performance objective. These activities allow the trainer and participants to judge how well the information presented is being processed and the objectives being met.

Two kinds of evaluations should be filled out by the participants at the end of each workshop. One is the workshop evaluation form. The results of this evaluation will help the trainer prepare for the next session. The other is the self-rating form. Some participants may feel more comfortable completing this form at the beginning of the next workshop. Self-rating allows participants to chart their progress through the modules.

Organization

In the manual, the first page of each module's workshop section is the Suggested Format sheet. Here, we have mapped out the three-hour workshop session. (The three hours include a ten-minute break and time to complete workshop evaluations.)

Following the format sheet, you will find special instruction sheets and pages identified as handouts by the letter/number in the top right-hand corner (e.g., A/1). Some of these sheets should be duplicated so that each participant receives a copy. Others may be used with an opaque projector or made into transparencies and used with an overhead projector. If you do not have access to this equipment, you can copy some of the material onto newsprint.

Each participant should be assigned a folder in which she or he will find the materials needed for the current workshop. These materials include the competency sheet for the module, related handouts, the module review activity, the workshop evaluation form, and the self-rating form. At the end of the workshop session, participants should take with them all papers except the review activity, the evaluation form, and the self-rating form. The

review activity must be evaluated by the trainer. The workshop evaluation form should be left at some location in the room (anonymously). The self-rating form should remain in the folder, as it applies to each module.

Summaries

Module A: CBE and the Adult Learner. This module serves as an introduction to the CBE process and how it relates to adult ESL students. CBE is defined as a process leading to an individual's ability to function proficiently in society. Adult learners of ESL, by and large, have living with ease in this society as their goal.

First we will define competency-based education. Then participants will complete an exercise which demonstrates how we follow the CBE process in our everyday lives. CBE is not a new process, but rather a shift in our focus when it comes to class and instructional design. Next we will discuss the history and characteristics of CBE, how CBE relates to ESL, and what aspects are now present or can be easily incorporated into participants' programs.

After a discussion of the physical and psychological/social characteristics of adult learners, we can see how CBE is appropriate for that group. Adults go to school to meet needs. CBE designs learning around student needs. Perhaps the greatest adult ESL student need is to live and work in a new culture using a new language. CBE is organized around the teaching of lifeskills and thus works toward that same goal.

Module B: Needs Assessment and Language Functions. Planning instruction around students' needs is an integral part of competency-based education. In the adult ESL classroom, where adults go to learn in order to meet immediate needs, conducting a needs assessment is vital for a successful class. The goal of this workshop is for participants to recognize the importance of conducting a needs assessment and then be able to use the results when designing their class and planning instruction.

We begin the workshop by identifying the roles our students play in society. We then look at the situations in which people filling these roles must "perform." (A job seeker reads want ads and goes on job interviews.) These situations or contexts are the needs around which classroom instruction should be designed. (Students need to read want ads and need to go on interviews.)

Having determined student needs, we look at the language required to meet those needs. This is the major goal of the CBE/ESL classroom. By analyzing needs for language, we begin working toward the goal of helping students learn the language they need to function successfully in this society.

Module C: Writing Competency-Based Objectives. A needs assessment produces needs which can be written as role-relevant tasks--competencies, which are the core of a competency-based instructional program. When competencies are expanded into performance objectives, we have tools for designing both instruction and evaluation. Participants will be given the opportunity to write competencies and performance objectives for their students in this module's workshop.

There is a discussion of the characteristics and components of competencies (a statement of performance of a role-relevant task) and performance objectives (performance plus condition and criteria). Participants move from identifying competencies to writing them. This prepares participants for the next step, which will be to plan instruction around competencies.

Module D: Planning Instruction. Competencies identify for students and teachers what the former group is supposed to learn. Teachers must plan instruction which will enable their students to achieve those competencies.

In this workshop, we evaluate competencies for the language which is inherent in the required performance. Different language functions and structures may be appropriate for one competency. What is taught depends on the level and knowledge of the students. Previously learned items can be recycled in similar or new contexts.

Because CBE is related to lifeskills, the instructional plan for a competency-based class should include real life, communicative activities. The materials used in such a class should also assist students to achieve the skills they need for living and working in this society.

After determining criteria for appropriate activities and materials and identifying activities and materials which meet those criteria, participants will write activities based on competencies they have selected. At this time, they will begin to apply what they have learned in previous modules to instructional design. Adult needs are written as competencies from which linguistic and other skills are determined and serve as the focus of instruction using communicative activities.

Module E: Evaluating Student Performance. Evaluation is the last step before beginning the CBE process again. By evaluating student performance and progress, we document achievement of competency and determine where more instruction and practice are needed.

The first part of this workshop involves a discussion of the need for evaluation and appropriate evaluation tools and activities. Performance objectives tell us what to evaluate. The criteria we use for instructional activities tell us how to evaluate.

The overall goal for the workshop series states that participants will be able to apply CBE in their classes. The final activity provides participants with an opportunity to apply all they have learned in the five modules as they write a plan for a competency-based lesson.

OVERVIEW

WORKSHOP SERIES OVERVIEW - INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of the overview is for workshop participants to learn about the overall goal of the workshops and the format of the five modules. The overview is presented at the beginning of the first workshop (see Suggested Format, Module A).

O/1 - Overview of REEP Workshops: CBE in ESL

Go over the goal of the workshops. The five competencies which follow are the competencies of the five modules. The overall performance objective is where the workshops are leading and represents the final activity.

O/2 - Self-Rating Competency Recording Form

Participants fill out this form at the end of each session or at the beginning of the following session. This form serves as a method of evaluating how participants perceive their own level of competence. If you are supplying participants with folders which will remain on site, this is a sheet which will remain in the folder.

O/3 - Resources

This is an annotated listing of resource centers and books which participants might use for additional information now or at a future time.

O/4 - Don't Bother Us...We Can Cope: CBE for ESL

In this article, Joann LaPerla Berg and Beverly Galley Schwartz clearly explain the relationship between CBE and ESL and the organization of "traditional" and "competency-based" classes.

O/5 - The Loneliness of the Long-Distance Learner: Adult ESL

In this article, Nick Elson describes the characteristics of ESL learners and offers suggestions as to how their special needs can be met.

Handouts O/1, O/3, O/4, and O/5 may be sent to participants prior to the first workshop. It would be very helpful to both the trainer and the participants if the participants read the two articles before the workshop discussion of CBE and adult learners.

Format of the Workshops

- Each workshop begins with the reading of a competency sheet which lists the competency, rationale, performance objective, and enabling objectives for that module. By reading this sheet, participants find out what they are responsible for learning during each workshop.

- Each workshop is made up of a presentation by the trainer, handouts, and activities which may be completed alone, with partners, or in small groups.

- Each module has a review activity based on the competency/ performance objective. These activities allow the trainer and participants to judge how well the information presented is being processed and the objectives being met.

- An evaluation of the workshop should be filled out at the end of each workshop.

- The self-rating form should be filled out at the end of each module or at the beginning of the next. This form allows participants to chart their progress through the modules.

OVERVIEW OF REEP WORKSHOPS: CBE IN ESL

Goal

Participants will be able to apply competency-based education in their adult ESL classrooms.

- Participants will be able to develop a statement which describes the compatibility of CBE and adult ESL.
- Participants will be able to assess students' needs for planning CBE instruction.
- Participants will be able to write competencies and performance objectives for their classes.
- Participants will be able to design effective CBE instruction for the accomplishment of class competencies.
- Participants will be able to evaluate student performance.

Overall Performance Objective

Participants will demonstrate their understanding of the application of competency-based education in the adult ESL classroom by choosing a student need and writing an instructional plan which will enable students to meet that need. This plan will include:

- a statement of need
- a competency to be mastered
- a performance objective describing how mastery will be demonstrated
- linguistic and other skills to be learned
- instructional activities leading to achievement of the competency
- an evaluation activity to be used to measure achievement of the competency.

SELF-RATING COMPETENCY RECORDING FORM

Name _____

Competency/Objective	Rating	
	Yes	No
Develop a statement which describes the compatibility of CBE and adult ESL		
- Define terminology used in CBE		
- Identify and discuss CBE characteristics		
- Describe characteristics of an adult learner and how to adjust for them in the classroom		
- Analyze the effect of adult roles on the adult learner		
- Describe the application of CBE in ESL		
- Describe the elements of CBE in own program		
Assess students' needs for planning CBE instruction		
- List ways to assess students' needs		
- Develop a tool for assessing students' needs		
- Adapt/use the tool developed to assess own students		
- Identify the language functions which enable students to fulfill their needs		
Write competencies and performance objectives for class		
- Identify role-relevant tasks		
- Distinguish between competencies and instructional activities		
- Identify the components of a performance objective		
Design effective instruction		
- Analyze a competency for linguistic and extra-linguistic skills necessary to complete the task		
- Identify learning activities appropriate to a specific competency		
- Identify characteristics of appropriate materials		
Evaluate Student Performance		
- Describe reasons for evaluation		
- Identify alternate ways to evaluate student performance		

RESOURCES

Resources

The Center for Applied Linguistics. CAL is a nonprofit research and service organization which is interested in the relationship between language and education and social policy. It has an extensive library and has published many guides for teaching ESL in the Adult Ed classroom, teaching refugees, and fact sheets on refugees.

Address: 3502 Prospect Street, N. W., Washington, DC 20007
Telephone: 202-928-9292

Educational Resources Information Center. ERIC is a nationwide network of information centers whose basic objective is to make current developments in educational research, instruction, and personnel preparation more readily accessible to educators and members of related professions.

The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL) is operated by CAL. It is responsible for the collection and dissemination of information in the general area of research and application in languages, linguistics, and language teaching and learning.

The address and telephone are the same as for CAL.

Virginia Commonwealth University ABE Resource Center. The Resource Center is an open facility which is part of VCU's School of Education. The offices and stacks are open 8:30 to 4:30, Monday through Friday, and visitation is welcomed. The Center will mail originals or copies of requested documents and materials. Teachers and administrators may request specific resources and assistance in meeting a pre-determined need in their programs. The ABE Materials Curricula Catalog and the Learning Resources Evaluations Manual should expedite materials requests. During working hours, the staff will accept collect calls for instructional consultations and recommendations.

Address: 1015 Main Street, 4065 Oliver Hall, Richmond, VA 23284
Telephone: 804-257-6521

Selected Sources

Key:				
	AL	Adult Learner	NA	Needs Assessment
	CBE	Competency-Based Education	C	Competencies
	PI	Planning Instruction	E	Evaluation
	F	Functional Approach	GI	General Interest

Bartley, Diana, E. ed. The Adult Basic Education TESOL Handbook. New York: Collier Macmillan International, Inc., 1979. (AL, CBE, PI)

Behrens, Sophia, ed. From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983. (CBE, PI, NA)

Bodman, Jean W., and Lanzano, Susan C. What ESL Students Want. Jersey City: Adult Education Resource Center, 1978. (NA)

Brumfit, C. J., and Johnson, K. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979. (F, PI, E)

Celce-Murcia, Marriane, and McIntosh, Lois, eds. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. Rowley, MA: Newbury House Publishers, Inc., 1979. (GI)

Croft, Kenneth, ed. Readings on English as a Second Language. Cambridge: Winthrop Publishers, Inc., 1980. (GI)

Elson, Nicholas, ed. Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults: Methodology. (TESL Talk, Vol. 14, 1 & 2). Ontario: Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, 1983. (AL, PI, E)

Findley, Charles A., and Nathan, Lynn A. "Functional Language Objectives in a Competency-Based ESL Curriculum." TESOL Quarterly, Vol. 14, No. 2 (June 1980), pp. 221-230. (CBE, F)

Finocchiaro, Mary, and Brumfit, Christopher. The Functional-Notional Approach from Theory to Practice. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. (F, PI, E)

Ilvin, Donna, and Tragardh, Thomas. Classroom Practices in Adult ESL. Washington, DC: TESOL, 1978. (GI)

Littlewood, William. Communicative Language Teaching. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981. (F, PI)

Mager, Robert F. Preparing Instructional Objectives. Belmont, CA: Pitman Learning, Inc., 1975. (C)

Munby, John. Communicative Syllabus Design. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978. (PI)

Oskarsson, M. Approaches to Self-Assessment in Foreign Language Learning. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1978. (E)

Parker, James T., and Taylor, Paul G., eds. The CB Reader. Upper Montclair, NJ: National Adult Education Clearinghouse, Montclair State College, 1980. (CBE, NA)

Richterich, R., and Chancerel, J. L. Identifying the Needs of Adults Learning a Foreign Language. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1977. (NA)

Savignon, Sandra J., and Berns, Maggie S., eds. Initiatives in Communicative Teaching. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., 1984. (F, PI, E)

Steiner, Florence. Performing with Objectives. Rowley, MA: Newbury House, 1980. (C)

Stevick, Earl. Adapting and Writing Language Lessons. Washington, DC: Foreign Service Institute, 1971. (PI)

Valette, R., and Disick, R. Modern Language Performance Objectives and Individualization. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., 1972. (C)

Van Duzer, Carol, and Mansoor, Inaam. The BEEP Curriculum: A Functional Approach to Competency-Based Survival ESL. Arlington: Arlington County Public Schools, 1981. (C)

Van Ek, J. Threshold Level English. Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1980. (F)

Wilkins, D. Notional Syllabuses. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976. (F)

DON'T BOTHER US..WE CAN COPE: CBE FOR ESL*

by

Joann LaPerla Berg

and

Beverly Galley Schwartz

Competency-Based Adult Education: an educational process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function in society.

ESL practitioners have always been generally committed to the goal of helping adult learners function in a strange society and more specifically learn the language of their new environment. Therefore, for instructors, administrators, and counselors of adult ESL programs, CBE is neither a revolutionary process nor a concept with which we can't cope. To say that we in ESL have "taught" adult learners to survive is, however, presumptuous. Adult ESL learners have "survived" many different contexts. That they have immigrated to a new society is proof that they have survived a great deal. What we are perhaps better equipped to do is what we have always proposed we do best: help with the language learning process and improve functional competency. If we view the language in its totality and accept the components to include the structure (written and oral systems), the phonology, vocabulary, and the non-verbal system, we can then look at the total picture of what adult learners are confronted with in order to function competently in our society, and what our role is in facilitating their learning to cope more effectively. Coping skills in ESL is, then, a bringing together of the language (structurally speaking) and the culture inherent in the language in a way that is consistent with the adult learner's needs and a representation of the real language used in his/her real world. Competency-based adult education, as a process leading to the mastery of basic and life skills, is then in harmony with our goals in ESL programs. We too are looking to assist students in becoming autonomous individuals capable of functioning in our society. For even many native Americans this is difficult; in the case of ESL learners it is further complicated by the fact that the society is a "foreign" one in which not only cultural but linguistic problems need to be attended to.

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*Reprinted from Adult Literary and Basic Education, Vol. 3, No. 3, Fall 1979, pp. 185-191.

If we examine the process we use to determine an ESL curriculum, perhaps we can better understand the relationships of coping skills to the ESL learner. Most of the time in preparing a lesson, we deal with some basic issues: (1) What am I going to teach? (content of a lesson); (2) How am I going to teach this? Sometimes we become so focused on the "what's" and the "how's" that we never really consider the "why" or what could logically follow, "Should I be doing this at all or should I be doing something different?" By considering the "why's" and "should's" before the "what's" and "how's" a competency-based ESL process can be implemented. The shift, then, is from a curriculum-limiting approach in which the learner's needs are not considered to a learner-generated process in which the goal is to enable the adult learner to realize his/her personal objectives. Let us examine the three questions in terms of their implications for establishing an ESL/CBE program.[1]

(1) Why am I going to teach this? (and should I be doing something different?)

If we are committed to meeting the needs of our adult learners, then to answer this question we must have some basis for determining what the needs are. Utilizing reliable needs assessment instruments both formal and informal are ways to determine what adults perceive to be their needs. A good example of a formal needs assessment has been developed and field tested by Jean Bodman and Susan Lanzano at the Adult Education Resource Center, Jersey City State College, New Jersey.[2] This carefully constructed student interest survey was administered in eighteen languages. It is an excellent attempt at assessing the learning goals of a significant cross section of ESL students.

Although we can look at an analysis of a formal survey such as this and arrive at some valid generalizations, we must be careful not to assume or presume the goals of all adult learners. Informal surveys by instructors can also be valuable in providing information on specific learner needs. An example of an informal survey might be to provide a list of twenty or more topics of interest to an ESL learner and ask him/her to choose the ten most interesting and then perhaps of those ten the three or four most important. The results will be both surprising and inconsistent within any given group. Content requests may range from the expected, i.e., learning about local transporation, to the unexpected, i.e., learning U. S. geography!

(2) What am I going to teach?

After understanding and accepting learning needs, thought can then be given to what information, coping skills, and specific language should be incorporated to accomplish the goals. The "what" or content of an ESL lesson has been traditionally thought of as what language (i.e., grammatical structure) was to be practiced and internalized in a given lesson. In responding to learners' needs we must shift our emphasis from the language as an end result, to the learner and that language necessary to meet his/her stated goals.

This is not to say that language structures are to be eliminated from an ESL class and all that we have learned about the English language is to take a secondary role. On the contrary, after establishing the context in which the learner is to use language, it is up to us to carefully analyze the language needed to function in the given context. In analyzing the language actually used in a given situation is it important to consider the real language used by native speakers in that context and those aspects of the real language the learner needs to know to be functionally competent.

If we accept a structural approach to language learning, it is at this point then we can bridge the gap between structure and coping skills. Thus, if the predetermined objectives of an ESL curriculum are based on structural items, the learner generated contexts could be used to integrate the linguistic items and the coping skill. Since most ESL programs in which there are several levels of instruction determine placement and movement of students from one level to another on mastery of structural items, and since a structural syllabus is generally accepted, using that framework to integrate coping skills and language is appropriate at any level of ESL instruction. The particular context of learning how to fill out job applications, for example, can be adapted to all ESL levels: The difference would not be the material used but rather the amount of linguistic knowledge expected of the learners. It is tempting to dismiss coping skills at the beginning level as being too difficult for the student just starting to learn English. However, by dealing with real language and student interest, even a beginning ESL lesson can integrate language and real situations that would be meaningful to the learner and a representation of actual language.

(3) How am I going to do this?

After determining the need, the language and context of an ESL coping skills lessons, the process for presenting it to the learner is identified. In adult education and more specifically in CBE, the goals of the learning process are "public." Adults want to know the outcomes of instruction. By including the learner in the determination of goals, both the teacher and the learner will have focus. How the learner will be using the language--orally, in written form, and whether in an active or passive role--will determine the modality of instruction. The learner should also be given the opportunity to explore alternate routes to acquire competency. Group work, individual work, reading, writing, and oral work are examples of different learning strategies and modalities which should be made available. ESL instructors have always had to take into account different learning styles and modes in order to work with heterogeneous groups, and the CBE process is no exception to this demand.

We must also now examine the role of the teacher in the CBE process. Various language teaching methodologies, including most prominently The Silent Way[3] and Counseling Learning/Community Language Learning[4] have challenged

the more "traditional" role of the teacher and have made us more aware of the learner and his/her responsibility in the learning process. The concept of the teacher as the all-knowing role model and the student as the imitator of the teacher has been challenged by many instructors who accept their responsibility to be more of a facilitator or helper in the learning process. In the ESL class this means letting the learner work on the language in an active role when the goal is active knowledge of the language, and providing opportunities for the learner to develop passive language knowledge when that is the goal.

The ESL instructor will always be the "knower" of the linguistic items, but as in all adult learning situations, the adult brings certain knowledge and skills to contribute to the learning process. In an ESL/CBE program, the role of the "teacher" is to accept and recognize the adult learner's contribution and to be ready to admit his/her own content limitations. An "instructor-facilitator" of a CBE program cannot be expected to be an expert in all areas that his/her learners want to know about. The ESL/CBE facilitator does know what language is needed for functional competence and can learn to direct clients to acquire other information.

In sum, we have identified four important differences between the organization of a "traditional" ESL class and a "competency-based" one:

(1) The "Content" of learning--that context within which language is taught--is learner-generated. The competency or coping skill to be learned along with the structure and vocabulary appropriate to the learner's level of language mastery is mutually determined by the instructor and the learner. This learning contract can be formal or informal. Just as any English structure can be taught within a variety of contexts, so can the depth of complete-ness of the context be adjusted to suit language mastery levels while meeting real language, real experiential, needs.

(2) The "lessons" of learning--those language concepts and skills leading to understanding of and fluency in English--are treated not solely as ends in themselves but also as steps or activities leading to mastery of the competency. Thus, each structure learned and practiced has immediate application to the real world, with the emphasis placed on dealing with a specific facet of a strange culture

(3) The "testing" of learning--those measures designed to assess skill mastery--are insofar as possible competency-based. That is, the ideal "test" for a limited learning contract is the performance of a task or solution of a problem using appropriate learned language correctly.

(4) The "teacher" of ESL experiences a distinct shift in role. While the teacher remains the expert--the knower--of language in the broad sense, he/she is relieved of the necessity of also being the master of content. In helping to design and carry out the learning contract, the teacher becomes a facilitator, not the exclusive source of content.

So, what does an ESL/CBE classroom look like? How does the group--learners and teacher--go about its daily business? An important difference here between "traditional" and "competency-based" classrooms is the expansion of sources of content: the resources of the community and, even more significantly, of the learners themselves will be used more extensively. Two kinds of classroom organization are obvious: learners can be grouped by language mastery level, or they can be grouped by areas of content interest.

In the first, then, learners will be working and helping each other in a specific content area but limited to the same level of language mastery; in the second, learners may be working to achieve functional competence in similar situations but will be performing at different levels of language ability. An ideal program, of course, would allow for flexibility in organizing both ways for different purposes.

But few of us operate in ideal programs. What are the immediate implications of the CBE movement for ESL? For one thing, the teaching of coping skills--what good teachers have always done--is now legitimized by the educational establishment. And the CBE movement can help us to facilitate the learning (as opposed to teaching) of those coping skills in an organized fashion while remaining true to the principles of good language teaching.

While we are not yet capable in terms of materials and human resources of providing hands-on content to fit every level and every need, every program already has or can easily get a smorgasbord of content to offer! One mistake often made when organizing a CBE program is to think you have to have it all to offer right away. CBE is, after all a process and so is CBE program organization. And although we'll probably continue to borrow and steal materials as we've always done, there are materials (and, more importantly, models) available to us now.[5]

Other immediate implications include: acceptance of the notion of public learning objectives; reemphasis on the transferability of skills; and a new look at the on-going bilingual education controversy. These topics obviously cannot be dealt with here, but we should give them serious thought. Briefly, along with the acceptance of public learning objectives comes the acceptance of public teacher capabilities! Along with renewed proof of the transferability of academic skills comes new emphasis on problem-solving as a transferable behavior. And along with our determination to teach English and cultural functioning simultaneously comes the acceptance of a place for bilingual education, particularly on beginning levels.

What are the long-range implications of the CBE movement for ESL? The major trend in all of adult education today is toward the reorganization of most programs to implement competency-based instruction, assessment, and reporting systems. Two approaches to competency-based education are now being implemented in varying degrees, the one dealing with predetermined objectives, such as the AVL schema, the other dealing solely with objectives generated by the learning contract. This latter approach is the one most likely to be adopted by ESL programs, since existing content curricula do not meet the language learning needs of ESL students.

Either way, with the recognition of the necessity for competency-based instruction in order to help all adult learners cope with the increasing demands of our society must come the acceptance--from both within and without the field--that ESL can no longer go on in isolation. Perhaps it is time to make ESL classrooms "public" and continue to recognize the needs of the adult ESL learner in a more organized way. The CBE process can help us with that. We have been coping, but we can do better.

NOTES

[1]For a discussion of establishing CBE programs, see Paul G. Taylor and Joann Berg, "Administration Issues from the CBAE Perspective," in Proceedings of a National Invitational Workshop on Competency-Based Adult Education, edited by Carol E. Kasworm and Buddy R. Lyle, Austin, TX: University of Texas, 1979.

[2]Jean W. Bodman and Susan C. Lanzano, "What ESL Students Want: A Report of Their Opinions on Coping Skills in the Classroom." 1978, Adult Education Resource Center, Jersey City State College, Jersey City, NJ 07305.

[3]Gattegno, Caleb. The Common Sense of Teaching Foreign Languages. New York: Educational Solution, Inc., 1976.

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[4]Curran, Charles A. Counseling-Learning: A Whole-Person Model for Education. New York: Grune & Stratton, Inc., 1972.

[5]See, for example, Susan C. Lanzano, ed., ESL and Coping Skills: A Guide for Teachers. 1979, Resource Dissemination Center, Centers of Adult Continuing Education, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043. This guide includes an important paper, "Teaching ESL for Communication Beyond the Schoolroom," by Susan C. Lanzano; a reprint of the Bodman and Lanzano report; and four model lessons in ESL and coping skills. For other ESL and coping skills materials suggestions, a bibliography is available from Joann LaPerla Berg, Adult Education Resource Center, Centers of Adult Continuing Education, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043.

O/13

THE LONELINESS OF THE LONG DISTANCE LEARNER: ADULT ESL*

Mick Elson

I have chosen this title because it suggests to me an image of a group of students who seem to fall on the periphery of our ESL programs. These are the adult students, often older than the average in adult classes, who seem to drift endlessly through the system, going from one program to another, becoming a fixture on the ESL circuit but never seeming to make any real or substantial progress. Whatever gains they make seem disproportionate to both their own and the teacher's efforts, and the discouragement level on both sides is frequently high.

In this paper, I want to describe the situation of the adult learner, to the extent that one can generalize such complexity, suggest some ways that we can help them avoid getting into the situation I have referred to above, and indicate some approaches to help them break out of this cycle.

Background of the Adult Learner of English

The adult language learner works under many handicaps. As an immigrant, he or she has arrived here under an immigration policy that tends to favor admittance for two groups of people: trained professionals with a specific high-level skill, and a larger group--those who will do the work that Canadians born here are reluctant to do. This latter group, which constitutes the bulk of immigrants to this country, tends to become part of the working class. As such, they are the first to feel the effects during an economic slowdown, a factor with important ramifications for their willingness or ability to acquire English.

The physical location of adult classes tends not to be equivalent to those of "regular," or mainstream classes. Classes might be far from the student's home and at inconvenient times, resulting in various logistical problems for the students in just getting there. Since many adults work, their classes are held in the evenings. Few places can match the dreariness of a public building such as a high school at night, with its empty corridors, fluorescent lighting, and balky vending machines. Any feeling the adults might have that they are somehow not a dominant concern in society could only be reinforced by this cheerless atmosphere.

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In addition to the location, many of the adult learners come to class after a long day of work, often on outside jobs. The effect of coming into a hot classroom after a day working outside is probably familiar to any teacher of an adult evening class: a small portion of the students spend a lot of the evening torn between a strong pull to learn English and an equal pull to fall asleep. In sum, the adult learner faces a number of problems before actually tackling the language itself.

In this context, I would now like to move on to some considerations about the adult learner, and more specifically the adult as a language learner.

Research over the years has tended to indicate that the ability to learn remains essentially the same over one's lifespan. All of us can cite particular examples to back this up, and, in fact, in many cases an adult may learn more quickly than a child because of advanced cognitive ability. (Taylor, 1974; Fatham, 1975)

The adult is a complete person, with the capacity to deal with the environment and to provide for needs directly or indirectly. At the same time, the adult's character and identity have been formed, and therefore he or she has less freedom of response than the child. They may be less adaptable and more questioning than the child, applying reason to the language learning process in a way that the child might not.

The adult usually knows why he or she is studying the language, relating it to a goal of some kind. The teacher must recognize this motivation and satisfy it through contextualized instruction that responds to the particular aims of the students as much as possible. Adults are most motivated by activities immediately applicable to their needs; they need to see the relevance and immediacy of what they are being asked to do in class.

As a language learner, the adult brings a wealth of personal experience and knowledge to the classroom which is vastly greater than could be found in a textbook. The climate of learning in the classroom, and the interaction between students and teacher must acknowledge and utilize this characteristic. Teachers will struggle through dialogues involving fictitious characters and circumstances when students might well be able to supply very real situations from their own lives, which touch them more directly than any teacher-made situation could.

In understanding the situation of the language learner who has come from another country, it is important to recognize that culture cannot be transferred. The culture of the immigrant is often perceived by Canadians only in terms of its most apparent manifestations--the food, dances, and costumes of a particular country, for example. But this view does an injustice to the subtlety of culture, for bound up as it is in an inter-twining of environment, language, politics, religion, and economics, to name the most obvious, it

reflects important aspects of the individual and does not survive in the new country without some profound changes.

Given the extent to which we relate to our culture and take comfort and strength from it, it is easy to see the traumatic upheaval in moving into a new culture, not as a visitor but as a person who has to come to terms with that culture over a long period of time. Feelings of anomie and estrangement are inevitable. The newcomer often feels like an alien, and in fact that term was once used to refer to immigrants in government documents.

Larsen and Smalley (1972) have suggested that before real language learning starts to take place, learners must feel that they are part of the target language community. But for any number of reasons, that community may not welcome the recent arrival. Different ways of dressing, of behaving, fear that they are "taking jobs," might all be factors resulting in rejection, and, in turn, for the immigrant a slowing of the language acquisition process. Unconsciously, perhaps, the adult immigrant might wonder, "Why learn the language of a society that doesn't want me?"

From the perspective of the immigrant, these attitudes might only compound an already difficult situation. Take for example the case of the doctor, accountant, or teacher who arrives in this country. Chances are good that he or she will be in classroom with people from a social class quite different from the one they are accustomed to back home. The result may well be a loss of positive self-image, and an increase in doubts about their position in this new society, both of which can have a direct effect upon their language learning. The teacher should be sensitive to this possibility and be prepared to help learners in this situation maintain a realistic perspective on their position.

Adult language learners frequently are skilled in various trades which they practised perfectly satisfactorily in their home country. They might not appreciate the insistence here that in order to practise that trade, they must first master an appropriate level of English. This might be in order to pass a certification exam, or simply at the insistence of the boss. Whatever the reason, it is possible that some adult learners may simply not want to be at school, sitting in those little seats which reinforce a feeling of childishness, of being back in school, and may even evoke unpleasant memories associated with their original school years. The teacher must remember that whatever the impediments of the learning environment or student attitude these are <u>adult</u> classes, and any activities that put the adult in a childish position are to be avoided.

As adults, these people carry with them all the usual adult baggage, worries about job security money, family, the future. In one family, the wife may be working, but the husband may have been laid off. The husband may have come from a background which stressed his role as family provider, the

wife from a background which stressed her place in the home, looking after the house. This role reversal could cause pressures which would work against their efforts to learn English, distracting them and taking energy which might better be used for the language learning process.

At the same time, the self-image and confidence of either parent might be shaken by the rapidity with which their children pick up English while they seem to be making far less progress. The parents may even be relying on the children to translate for them and explain things going on around them. A further source of pressure might be the rapid urbanization or Canadianization process that they see their children undergoing, drawing them away from the "old ways" and the parents' values.

The Adult Learner in the Classroom

While any of these factors may affect the learner in one form or another, there are circumstances related more specifically to the school or the class itself which will influence how well the adult acquires English.

The attitude of a student toward the teacher may be negative for no other reason than the teacher is younger than the student. An older male adult might resent being taught by a younger female; while this might be cultural, it might also be one more reminder of the "reduction" in his position since coming to Canada. He is in a position only a child in school would be likely to find himself in "back home."

Language often becomes the scapegoat for problems that adult learners may be having. As the most obvious source of difficulty, it is easy for a learner to say in effect, "if only I knew English, everything would be all right." This, coupled with difficulties the adult might be having in learning the language, often results in a negative attitude toward the language which works against the acquisition of that language, thereby setting up a negative cause and effect cycle. The teacher who recognizes this situation must work to show the adult that many of the difficulties he or she faces might be those of any adult in the country, whether that person speaks English well or not. This again argues that the teacher should encourage the adult learner of English to maintain a realistic perspective on problems, and also underlines the need to approach the adult as a whole, complex individual.

Students in adult classes might also react negatively to the teaching technique that is being used. A student's particular sensibility might mean her or she would react more positively to a behaviorist-based approach, for example, rather than a cognitive one. Because of personal variables, a learner might be more prepared to learn by listening rather than speaking--but this approach might not suit the teacher. As a result, a conflict is set up between the teacher and the student. The student's desire to please the teacher might contradict what the student would really like to do in order to feel comfortable

in the learning process. John Schumann refers to this conflict as personal agenda versus teacher's agenda (Schumann, Schumann, 1977) and describes some of the complications that arise from this based on his own experiences as a language learner.

Some Responses

All of the preceding has been an attempt to convey a sense of the complexity of the situation of the adult learner of English, and how this might influence his language learning endeavors. Clearly, given the complexity, a point-by-point treatment of these difficulties would be unrealistic, but the following section describes some approaches that, based on an awareness of the problems faced by the adult learner, might prevent them from getting trapped in a non-productive learning situation, or help them to break out of one.

1. Be understanding of the individuality of the students. They bring an individuality of experience to the class that has to be respected. We must try to show genuine interest in them and their background, and use strategies that encourage them to use that background. Even in large classes, it is possible through grouping and individualization to single students out and show them that they have something to give to the class. We are not trying to change their identity, but to help them feel positive about themselves, their native language, and the target language.

2. Establish realistic goals for the students. Get to know how they regard the language learning process, why it is important or necessary for them to learn English, what they are going to be doing in the future, and the suitable level of ability in English. The answers to these questions should be considered by the teacher when organizing the classwork. Learning English may not, incredibly, be the most important thing on the adult learner's mind, but at the same time, we must be on the lookout for indications that the language difficulty is being blamed for more problems than is really the case. Through class activities and the materials we use, it is possible to show the students that they are perfectly capable of making progress in this language, and that many of their problems are general human ones, not just ones that they alone have as second language learners. Try to show that what they are doing in the classroom has purpose, direction, and a realistic possibility of success. Encouragement is a gift that the teacher can give to the students and a positive self-image is a major contributor to success in language learning.

3. Students will often impose a teacher role upon you, saying in effect, "OK, teach me." There are times when a clear teacher-student role differentiation is appropriate and conducive to learning. But

there is also a danger in this that responsibility for student learning is given over to the teacher, with a lessening of the students' sense of responsibility for the process. It seems to me ultimately more productive in a class of learners to avoid a teacher-oriented classroom and decentralize the class, switching to a more student-to-student focus instead. Among other results, this shifts the responsibility for learning to the class, and helps to mitigate any resentful attitudes toward the teacher that a student might have. Through this process, the adult learners will come to appreciate that they are active, sharing, and mutually supportive participants in the learning process.

There is no reason why students, at various times, should not

(a) take over the class in a teacher role to conduct an activity

(b) suggest specific exercises

(c) conduct drills

(d) make corrections

(e) make up their own dialogues, based on real situations they have experienced

(f) bring in materials to serve as part of a lesson--newspaper stories, driver manuals, forms, etc.

4. Given the "after hours" circumstances of many adult ESL classes, it is advisable to keep the classes varied and active, not just within the class period but from week to week. There is a danger of taking this too far, in which case the students might get confused and lose the sense of purpose and direction referred to in No. 2 above. Be sensitive to the rhythm of the class, when to pick up the pace and slow down to maintain student involvement and attention. Variety comes from many sources:

   (a) bringing in guest speakers who represent society at large and might be from professions the students aspire to. It is encouraging for the students if some of these guests are also successful second language learners.

   (b) short/long drills or exercises

   (c) mixing the skills, reading, writing, listening, speaking

(d) using games audio-visuals

(e) dividing the class into pairs, larger groups, individuals, etc.

(f) meeting in different locations.

5. In the case of the adult ESL classes that only meet two or three times a week, some simple kinds of assignments can be effective in keeping the students conscious of the learning process between classes, and reinforcing language use. Don't be disappointed if the work is not done, there are many good reasons why it might not be. But some attempt at carry-over between classes can be helpful, and can help to keep the student as an active participant in the learning process.

The students can be given questions that they have to find out the answers to and report back to class--this could lead them into cultural, informational, citizenship areas--taking them out into the society around them. They might also be assigned a television show to report on, be asked to do some simple homework exercises, to read the paper and report some noteworthy item to the class, to find examples, in context, of structures that were practised in class, to learn the procedures and problems involved in such things as buying a house, getting a mortgage, borrowing from the bank, having a job interview, and so on. Many of these activities have the advantage of taking them out of the classroom and into the general society to participate, and through this process, you reinforce their consciousness that learning is not restricted to the classroom, and that to a great extent, they can be their own teachers.

6. Make the language you use in the classroom real and relevant. This may seem obvious, but frequently, what a textbook offers as relevant language, or even what we as teachers think is relevant and realistic, on close examination turns out to be nothing of the kind. It is worth making an informal study of the way language is <u>really</u> used in situations before trying to duplicate those situations in class. Too often, we end up teaching language the way we think it should sound, rather than the way it does. It is helpful here again to have students bring in materials that they have to deal with. John Fanselow (Fanselow, 1980) has made some interesting observations about the difference between classroom language and "real" language in situations in the workplace, two interesting points about "real" language being the frequency of swear words and the rarity with which an object under discussion is actually referred to directly.

7. Related to the point above is the need to make distinctions between language-like behavior and having the students actually function in

the target language. It is quite possible for a student to give the teacher what he or she wants to hear, but no real use of the language, no genuine communication, may be taking place. The teacher must put the students in situations where they have to actually function in the target language. The student must not only repeat, but must be able to generate contextually appropriate language, based on understanding and a concept of what he wants to say. Exercises that require the working out of a problem--"My car is making this strange noise," "Is it ever right to steal?"--help the student to associate language and concept in a meaningful way. Without this base in meaning, the student ends up, as John and Mary Boyd have pointed out, with the criteria for discerning the correct grammatical structure but not the corresponding criteria for analyzing functions of language or use of language in a given setting. (Boyd, Boyd, 1980)

8. A final point to make about language and the adult learner is that we must make sure that we simplify the language--where appropriate--but not the content. As pointed out elsewhere in this paper, adult language learners are sensitive to implications of childishness in their situation. Teachers in turn must be sensitive to the appropriateness of materials for adults.

Finally, in case this all adds up to present a rather bleak prospect for successful language teaching to adults, it should be clear that while this particular category of teaching may be one of the most difficult and demanding, it can also be one of the most satisfying. This paper has stressed the necessity for understanding the complexity of the situation of adult learners, for acknowledging their individuality, and for making them active participants in the language learning process, using relevant language. We are helping adults to become bicultural as well as bilingual and to unlock their ability to make a positive contribution to society. There are few rewards greater than seeing an adult student achieve just this connection.

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MODULE A

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION AND THE ADULT LEARNER

Competency

Participants will be able to develop a statement which describes the compatibility of CBE and adult ESL.

Rationale

Adult ESL students attend class to develop skills that will enable them to function proficiently in society. Competency-based education is a performance-based process that leads to mastery of such skills. In order to implement CBE, teachers must first understand what it is and how it relates to their adult ESL students.

Performance Objective

Using their notes, participants will explain in writing why CBE works in the ABE/ESL classroom. They will include a definition of CBE and at least three characteristics of adult learners.

Enabling Objectives

Will define terminology used in CBE.

Will identify and discuss CBE characteristics.

Will describe the characteristics of an adult learner and how to adjust for them in the classroom.

Will analyze the effect of adult roles on the adult learner.

Will describe the application of CBE in ESL.

Will identify elements of CBE found in own programs.

CBE AND THE ADULT LEARNER: BACKGROUND NOTES

What Is CBE?

Competency-based education is defined by the United States Office of Education as "a performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society."[1] Knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be acquired are based on role-relevant competencies that are determined by assessing the student's goals, desires, and needs. Student achievement is based on demonstrated ability--she/he can do what is stated in the competency.

A competency-based process has been used in business and industry and in the military for many years. Most of us will use some form of it at one time or another in our daily lives, although we may not be consciously aware of it. We set goals, assess what we need to achieve them, plan, implement our plan, evaluate our progress, and revise or continue our plan until we achieve our goals.

The origin of the CB process in educational settings can be traced back to the 1960's basic adult education agenda to help adults meet their daily life responsibilities. Developments in teaching methodology during the 1970's contributed as we moved from a teacher-centered classroom where the teacher was responsible for the learning to a more student-centered classroom where the student was responsible, from a mechanistic view of the learner to a more humanistic view which considered the whole person with the adult responsibilities, knowledge, and experiences that she or he brings to the classroom.

The 1970's also brought a cry for accountability. Relevancy, effectiveness, and efficiency became the buzz words. Three developments in adult education emerged to meet the challenge. One was the New York External High School Diploma Program through which diplomas were awarded on the basis of demonstrated competency. Another was the Adkins Life Skills Program which successfully trained adults to become more employable. The third development was the acceptance and approval by the U. S. Office of Education of the Adult Performance Level (APL) research project report on adult functional competency that was issued by the University of Texas.

The APL project identified five knowledge areas (Occupational, Consumer, Health, Government/Law, and Community Resources) and four basic skills areas (Communication, Computation, Problem Solving, and Interpersonal Relationships). Adult literacy was then defined in terms of

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[1]Report of the USOE Invitational Workshop on Adult Competency Education. (Washington, DC: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1978.)

competencies necessary for successful performance in these areas. For example, under the knowledge area of Consumer, a communication skill would be the ability to order food in a restaurant. A computation skill would be the ability to count change.

Since the 1970's there has been an increase in the use of CBE in other areas--one of which is ESL. The application of CBE to ESL means that we are teaching basic life skills while developing the language necessary to perform these skills. A meaningful context is created that brings together "language (structurally speaking) and the culture inherent in the language in a way that is consistent with the learner's needs and a representation of the real language used in his/her real world."[2] A more honest exchange of information can occur than might be possible in a traditional classroom where the language is the subject matter.

CBE/ESL provides a general framework for organizing instruction that is consistent with curriculum development practices. A teacher considers why (need), what (content), and how (methodology) she or he is going to teach. Please note that CBE does not specify one particular methodology over another. However, there are certain implications for selecting materials and planning instruction. The teacher must keep in mind that the content is based on real life tasks.

Adult ESL students come to class with needs and desires requiring immediate attention. Course content based on these needs and expressed as concrete goals (competencies) provides the student with a sense of direction that is relevant and useful. They know what is expected and have a basis for self-assessment that will build confidence along with a sense of accomplishment.

Characteristics of a CBE Program

The Virginia Department of Education has developed the following list of required and helpful characteristics of a CBE program.

Required

1. Course Content is Based upon Required Tasks/Competencies. Competencies to be learned by the students are determined in advance of instruction by task analysis methods. The purpose of the task analysis is to find out what is required for success in employment or education. The content for the program is based on the results of the task analysis.

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[2]Joann LaPerla Berg and Beverly Galley Schwartz, "Don't Bother Us... We Can Cope: CBE for ESL," The CBE Reader, eds. James T. Parker and Paul G. Taylor, National Adult Education Clearinghouse, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey, 1980, p. 70.

2. Performance Objectives Are Developed for the Program. The content of the program is developed and stated in the form of performance objectives. There is one performance objective for each task/competency. In addition to the performance objectives, enabling objectives are sometimes developed for a CBE program.

3. The Required Competencies Are Specified to Students Prior to Instruction. The specific requirements and content of the program, course, or unit of instruction is provided to the student prior to learning. This helps the student better understand, prior to learning, what is required and thus facilitates learning.

4. Student Achievement Is Based upon Demonstrated Competency. The performance of skills is of prime importance in CBE. Whether the competency deals with skills, knowledge, or attitudes, the competency must be demonstrated at the minimal criteria for successful achievement to be recorded. This insures the acquisition of the necessary skills for employment by the student.

5. Criterion-Reference Testing Procedures Are Used to Evaluate Student Performance. A criterion-reference measure is developed for each competency, and student performance is compared to a set standard. Each student's performance is evaluated to the pre-determined standard rather than to other students' work.

6. Student Achievement Is Recorded for Articulation, Pre-Employment, and Permanent Records. A system is used to document the competencies achieved by each student. This information is critical to the students, teachers, and future employers.

Helpful

7. Individualized materials and Methods Are Used to Deliver Instruction. The use of individualized materials and methods is very useful when students have varied backgrounds and needs. Modules and learning activity packages are normally used when instruction is individualized to meet the needs of the student.

8. Learning Time Is Flexible. The student's rate of learning determines the time required to complete the program. Thus, slow learners are permitted to take additional time to gain competencies, while fast learners can proceed to advanced content.

9. Learning Is Guided by Feedback. Frequent or immediate feedback is provided to the student while learning is taking place. Self-check and assessments are incorporated into the instructional materials. Students have an opportunity to take a test when they are prepared rather than at scheduled intervals.

10. The Teacher Is an Instructional Manager or Facilitator of Instruction. The roles of the teacher and student are different in a CBE program. The teacher is more a manager, facilitator, and motivator in the instruction process. The student becomes more accountable for learning and is directly involved in the teaching-learning process.[3]

Definitions

Competency-Based Education: A performance-based process leading to demonstrated mastery of basic and life skills necessary for the individual to function proficiently in society.

Assessment: Identifying the students' goals, interests, and needs in order to plan instruction.

Competency: The demonstrated ability, including knowledge, skills, or attitudes, to perform a role-relevant task.

Performance Objective: The description of how mastery of a competency will be demonstrated. It includes performance, condition, and criteria.

Performance: The specific behavior expected of the student.

Condition: The performance situation. This may include visual aids provided or withheld, reference materials provided or withheld, etc.

Criteria (standard): How well the student must perform the competency to be considered acceptable. It can be quantitative or qualitative. If the measure of quality is highly subjective, the instructor is assumed to be the judge of acceptable performance unless otherwise stated. This judgment may be strictly a "go/no go" situation.

Enabling Objective: The identification of one thing a learner must be able to do or know in order to perform the competency.

Evaluation. Measuring student progress toward mastery of the competency.

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[3]Ralph A. Horne, Guide for Implementing Competency-Based Education in Vocational Programs, (Richmond, Virginia: Department of Education, 1981).

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS OF TRADITIONAL AND COMPETENCY-BASED ESL PROGRAMS

Program Characteristics	Conventional Adult ESL Programs	Competency-Based Adult ESL Programs
A. Instruction		
1. Desired Outcomes	Non-Specific, not necessarily measurable; typically goal-level statements (e.g., the student will be able to satisfy most survival needs and limited social demands)	Specific, measurable statements; typically at an objective level (e.g, make or cancel a doctor's appointment on the telephone, giving name, address, telephone number, and nature of problem)
2. Instructional Content	Language-based	Life skill competency-based
3. Amount of time provided for instruction	Fixed units of time, (e.g., semester, term)	Continued until learner demonstrates mastery
4. Mode of instruction	Emphasis on instructor	Emphasis on instructor as facilitator of student performance
5. Sequencing of instruction	Determined by text (usually grammar-focused)	Determined by assessed needs of students
B. Assessment		
1. Focus	Language proficiency	Life skill competency
2. Feedback	Delayed, limited	Immediate, understandable to student
3. Type	Norm referenced: measures performance against the performance of a specific group (e.g., other Beg. ESL, Int. ABE, etc.)	Criterion-referenced: measures performance against previously determined standards; may reference results to a standardized difficulty scale which depicts a continuum of life skills content
4. Based on	Recalled information--reflects knowledge about language	Demonstrated performance --reflects application of knowledge to life skill/ role

Autumn Keltner, Coordinator ABE/ESL, San Diego Community College District, San Diego, CA, 1984.

A/6

Characteristics of the Adult Learner

When we talk about the characteristics of the adult learner, it is often in relation to pre-adult learners--how adults differ from children. There are physical and psychological/social differences which are commonly identified as belonging to the adult learner which you will find listed below. As you read them, think about yourself as learner.

Physical. Adults are distinguishable from children by their

loss of hearing
loss of vision
loss of memory and/or the ability to remember
slowness to perform
fatigue

Psychological/Social. Adults are distinguishable from children by their

many and varied experiences
many and varied responsibilities
many and varied roles
motivation to learn
knowledge
maturity
sense of reality
ability to set goals
self-direction

Implications

Physical

Loss of Hearing

Arrange the room in a way that makes it easy for students to hear each other and the teacher.

Give instructions orally and in writing.

Use handouts and written exercises to reinforce class content.

Hold class in a quiet place with few distracting noises.

Loss of Vision

Arrange the room in a way that makes it easy for students to see each other, the teacher, the chalkboard, and any other visual materials.

Be sure written materials are clear and all visual aids are large enough to be seen.

Have good lighting and use nonglare chalk.

Read written instructions out loud.

Loss of Memory

This is tricky. The most important thing a teacher can do to help her or his students remember is REPEAT, REINFORCE, and REVIEW. Make sure students are aware of the importance of what they are doing and are focused on it. Reinforce it orally and in writing, and review it in subsequent lessons.

Give students time to write things down so they don't have to remember too much without notes.

Keep your lesson focused, and your students will remain focused.

Fatigue

Whether your class is during the day or in the evening, chances are your students work inside and/or outside the home. As much as they are interested in learning, their bodies may be sending them other messages. To combat fatigue we must:

Keep activities varied.

Use audio and visual aids, go on field trips, incorporate some humor in the classroom.

Design activities which call for active student participation.

Plan activities which require the most mental activity or concentration for the beginning of class when students will be most alert.

Make sure the physical climate of the room is comfortable. A hot, stuffy room will put the most motivated person to sleep.

Slowness to Perform

Give students time to move from one activity to the next.

Give students time to shift their focus from board to desks.

Remember, the older the students, the slower they will be. Plan for that when preparing your lessons.

Psychological/Social

It is possible to discuss the implications of the psychological and social characteristics of the adult learner together. It is here the differences between children and adults are most evident, and our ability to design instruction accommodating these differences is most important. Remember that in almost all cases, the adult learner is in the classroom by choice, and if that learner is not satisfied, there will be one more empty seat in the next class session.

Obvious as it may seem, the fact that our students are mature adults and not children is important to consider. Children learn for tomorrow; adults learn for today. Children are forming their values and

beliefs, while adults are fairly well set in their beliefs and their way of dealing with the world. As teachers, we must respect that important facet of our students' makeup. An adult classroom is a heterogeneous group of people. Each student needs to feel that she or he is being dealt with as an individual with something of value to offer the class--as much of value as what the teacher has to offer.

The adult educator is not "all knowing" and needs to approach her or his class with that in mind. We do not have all the answers. Adult learners are generally apprehensive about returning to the classroom and to the role of student and all that implies or may have implied in the past. Adult learners bring too much "extra baggage" into the classroom with them to be approached in the same way pre-adults would be.

Working with the adult learner as a whole involves taking into consideration the students' past experiences and knowledge and incorporating them into class activities. Our pasts are what make us what we are today. Relating something in lessons to students' recent or past experiences serves two main purposes. First, people learn more when they move from the known to the unknown--when they can build upon something they already control. Second, students appreciate being recognized as individuals who have already accomplished something in their lives.

Find out why the students are in class and what they want to achieve. (This will be covered in greater detail in Module B.) We may not always be able to teach directly to each student's background and interests, but the more we can incorporate this information into our classes, the more satisfied and motivated our students will be. Adults enroll in school in order to succeed where they have failed, or were lacking in the past, and to overcome future hurdles.

The challenge of teaching adults as adults becomes even greater in the ESL classroom. There is something about not being able to communicate one's ideas and feelings which makes the learner feel childish. Given a very restricted ability for self-expression, the student feels inadequate and is often looked upon as inadequate. No words, no brains is the message that is unconsciously coming across inside and outside the classroom.

Think about how you felt learning a foreign language or trying to communicate in a foreign country. It is often hard for people to keep in mind that the person who speaks like a child has the knowledge, experiences, and desires of an adult. Imagine (or remember) how frustrating it is for people not to treat you as a mature, responsible individual. (It is also possible that your insecurity in the second language would make you seek refuge in that "child mode.")

Keep in mind the ESL student who said (in native language), "The fact that I don't speak English well doesn't mean I'm a baby with no mind or feelings. I resent how easily people shrug off my problems and concerns because I don't have the language to ask the right questions or demand action."

Competency-Based Education and the Adult Learner

While a traditional classroom might be teacher centered, with focus on teaching and the teacher, the characteristics and special needs of the adult learner indicate a shift in focus to learning and the learner. As was mentioned earlier, when adults return to school, they are interested in learning for today--material which has immediate or near-immediate utility. Adult ESL students hope to learn the language they need in order to meet their needs and fulfill their responsibilities outside the classroom. They want to be able to function successfully in society. Competency-based education is a process which works toward the same goal.

In a CBE classroom, students are given the responsibility for learning, with the teacher acting as a facilitator to the process. Students are treated as adult individuals who can make decisions and be self-directing. This is achieved in a variety of ways.

Needs Assessment. When programs conduct a needs assessment before determining course content, students are given an opportunity for input about what they want/need to learn. Adults come to class by choice, and they want their teachers to be aware of why that choice was made.

Objectives. When the objectives which are generated from the needs assessment are specified to the students before instruction begins, the students are presented with a plan for achieving those objectives. They know the direction they are going and can now be held accountable for achievement of their goals (or the steps leading to those goals). Students are at least as responsible for learning as the teacher is for providing the appropriate tools and resources.

Flexibility. In a "true" CBE program, there is no limit set on the amount of time a learner has for achieving competency. This is not always possible in ABE/ESL classes. However, there is a need to be flexible when working with people for whom "student" is not a primary function. This includes recognizing their inability to maintain perfect attendance due to work schedule changes, childcare problems, and other adult responsibilities.

Flexibility in techniques is also a feature of the competency-based classroom. CBE is not a teaching methodology, but rather promotes the use of a variety of methodologies and techniques in the classroom. Activities must incorporate real-life situations, real-life skills, and, in the ESL class, authentic language.

Flexibility in time and techniques includes providing large-group, small-group, personalized, and individualized activities. Adult learners, in part due to the physical effect of age, in part due to the heterogeneity of the group, benefit greatly when presented with a variety of learning activities.

Feedback/Documentation. This important step in the CBE process is also of significance to the adult learner. As people who are taking responsibility for learning, students want information about how they are progresssing. They also want to let their teachers know how well they feel they are doing themselves. And at the end of a class or program, they appreciate a certificate of completion or achievement which lets the students know their work and effort have been recognized.

Role-Relevant Tasks. The competency-based class is designed around role-relevant tasks. This means taking into consideration the various roles and responsibilities the students have outside the classroom and determining what skills (lifeskills) are needed to fulfill them. The goal of competency-based education is functioning successfully in society. Most adults come to our ESL classes for the same reason.

CBE/ADULT LEARNER RESOURCES

Bartley, Diana E., ed. The Adult Basic Education TESOL Handbook.

Behrens, Sophia, ed. From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults.

Elson, Nicholas, ed. Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults: Methodology.

Findley, Charles A., and Nathan, Lynn A. "Functional Language Objectives in a Competency-Based ESL Curriculum."

Ilyin, Donna, and Tragardh, Thomas. Classroom Practices in Adult ESL.

Parker, James T., and Taylor, Paul G., eds. The CB Reader.

SUGGESTED FORMAT - MODULE A
CBE AND THE ADULT LEARNER

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
15 min.	Overview of sessions: See instructions O/1.	O/1:* Overview of workshops
15 min.	Warm-up Activity: See instructions A/2.	A/2: Warm-Up Activity
5 min.	Participants read competencies for this session.	A/1: CBE and Adult Learner
10 min.	Define CBE and present an overview of CBE as a process	
15 min.	Activity: Participants complete the activity sheet. Discuss the CBE process as it relates to curriculum planning. See instructions A/3.	A/3: CBE Process
20 min.	Present a history of CBE, its advantages, and its growing use in ESL. (Refer to Berg/Schwartz article.) Discuss characteristics of CBE programs. Compare traditional and CBE ESL programs. Invite participants to identify elements of CBE in their present classes.	A/4: Characteristics of CBE Programs A/5: Definitions A/6: Program Characteristics of Traditional & CBE ESL Programs O/4:* Berg/Schwartz article
10 min.	BREAK	
15 min.	Warm-Up Activity Discussion: See instructions A/2.	
20 min.	Discuss physical and social/psychological characteristics of adult learners. Ask participants for characteristics and write them on board, filling in any they might miss. Discuss the implications of these characteristics in the ESL class. Choose major characteristics and ask for ways of accommodating them--as simple as rearranging furniture in room to reevaluating what and how we teach.	
10 min.	Summarize/discuss Elson article.	O/5:* Elson article

*May be sent to participants ahead of time.

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
10 min.	Elicit from participants how CBE relates to adult learners.	
10 min.	Review Activity A: See instructions A/7.	A/7: Review Activity A
5 min.	Assignment: Participants should ask their students why they are studying English and/or what they plan to do when they have finished studying English. Bring these answers to the next workshop.	
10 min.	Workshop Evaluation	A/8: Evaluation

MODULE A

COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION AND THE ADULT LEARNER

Competency

Participants will be able to develop a statement which describes the compatibility of CBE and adult ESL.

Rationale

Adult ESL students attend class to develop skills that will enable them to function proficiently in society. Competency-based education is a performance-based process that leads to mastery of such skills. In order to implement CBE, teachers must first understand what it is and how it relates to their adult ESL students.

Performance Objective

Using their notes, participants will explain in writing why CBE works in the ABE/ESL classroom. They will include a definition of CBE and at least three characteristics of adult learners.

Enabling Objectives

Will define terminology used in CBE.

Will identify and discuss CBE characteristics.

Will describe the characteristics of an adult learner and how to adjust for them in the classroom.

Will analyze the effect of adult roles on the adult learner.

Will describe the application of CBE in ESL.

Will identify elements of CBE found in own programs.

INSTRUCTIONS--WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Part One

There are two purposes for this warm-up activity. One is to give participants a chance to get to know each other. The other is to get them to recognize characteristics of adult learners in themselves. (They will discover this second purpose later in the session.)

Divide the participants into small groups and hand out the questions. Ask that one member of each group be chosen to keep track of what is said so that he or she can summarize the information for the whole group before beginning the second half of the Module. (See Suggested Format.)

Part Two

Before beginning the second half of the module (after CBE and before the Adult Learner):

1. Ask the representative from each group to summarize what the members of the group learned about each other. While the representative is talking, record on the board the different kinds of experience, education, familial responsibilities, etc., present in the group of participants.
2. After each group has had a chance to share their information, discuss what has been discovered:
   - They have many and varied experiences.
   - They have many roles (worker, learner, parent...)
   - They have many and varied responsibilities which place demands on their time and may conflict with other interests (but they have managed to overcome those conflicts).

They are adult educators, and they are also adult learners. Many of the characteristics identified in themselves can be identified in their students. (Another example of this is that for most adult learners, student is not their chief role; they take part in educational programs part-time.)

3. Ask the participants to keep in mind what expectations they have when they attend workshops, classes, and demonstrations. What frustrates them? What makes them happy? How do they show their satisfaction or lack of it? And as they think about the answers, they should think about their students--all are adult learners.

Adapted from an activity found in The Teacher and the Adult Learner. Adult and Extension Education, Texas A&M University, 1977.

WARM-UP ACTIVITY

THINK ABOUT THE FOLLOWING AS YOU INTRODUCE YOURSELF:

(A) **What experiences do you bring with you to this workshop?**

- What is your current job?
- How long have you held it?
- What other positions have you held?
- What interests have you pursued?
- What is your educational background?
- Where have you lived?
- Do you have a family?

(B) **What problems or inconveniences did you have to overcome to be here?**

- Did you have to travel a great distance?
- Did you have to take time off from work or reschedule a previous engagement?
- Did you have to arrange for a babysitter, etc.?

INSTRUCTIONS--CBE PROCESS

CBE Process

The purpose of this activity is to introduce the CBE process so that the participants realize that CBE is not a revolution but rather a conscious application of a process consistent with goal planning in general and curriculum development in particular.

Instructions to participants are written on the activity form. It may be helpful to read them together to be sure that everyone understands the activity. It may be necessary to define the terms used.

The exercise should be done individually.

When everyone has completed the exercise, list the answers on the board. Discuss.

Goal	Will be able to purchase a new car
Needs	$2,000.00
Plan	Will pay minimum on monthly bills Will volunteer for overtime work Will spend very frugally
Implementation	Puts plan into effect
Evaluate Progress	Realization of need for more money (can't buy it yet)
Revise	Sell typewriter and bicycle
Goal Achievement	Purchase of new car

Then relate this process to CBE and curriculum planning.

Curriculum Planning	CBE
Why do I teach (NEED)	ID goals/needs, express them as competencies
What do I teach (CONTENT)	Knowledge, skills, attitudes specified in competencies
How do I teach (METHODOLOGY)--planning activities that teach real language in meaningful context, varying strategies to accommodate differences in adult learners	Competency related to real life role, competencies made public, teacher as facilitator

Curriculum Planning	CBE
Teach (Implement)	Teach
Evaluate	Can/can't perform competency
(Continue/Revise)	(Continue/Revise)
Goal Achievement	Demonstrates mastery of competency

CBE/ESL--teaching basic life skills while developing the language necessary to perform them.

THE CBE PROCESS

The steps involved in CBE proceed in a logical progression. Many of us apply these steps in our daily lives to achieve our desired goals, although we may not be conscious of the process. Consider the following story...

Lauren finally decided that a new car was a must. Her "old klunker" was giving her continuous trouble and she needed something more reliable to get her to work. The new car she wanted sold for $8000. Lauren did not want to purchase the car on an installment loan because of increased interest rates.

Lauren fully assessed her financial situation. Between money in savings and sale of her old car, she would be able to come up with $6000. In order to purchase the car, she needed an additional $2000.

To get the needed $2000, Lauren decided to set aside $500 a month for the following four months. In order to set aside the $500, she reasoned, "I'll pay the minimum due on incoming bills, volunteer for overtime hours at work, and spend very frugally."

Lauren spent the first two months working many overtime hours, limiting her spending, and saving her money as planned.

At the end of the second month, she checked her savings and, sure enough, there was $7000--only $1000 to go. She thought her plan was really running smoothly until it dawned on her that, during the months of saving, the cost of the car had probably increased.

Therefore, she decided to sell her no-longer-used typewriter and bicycle to secure the additional money needed for the increase.

At the end of four months, Lauren wrote out her check and proudly cruised the city in her new automobile.

(Continued)

Below, listed in random order, are the steps involved in the CBE process. Lauren actually used this process to secure her new car. Next to each story section above, write the step corresponding to Lauren's reasoning and action.

EVALUATION

ASSESSMENT

PLANNING

GOAL ACHIEVEMENT

IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL IDENTIFICATION

PLAN CONTINUATION/REVISION

Adapted with permission from Adult Basic Education Curriculum Development Facilitator/Trainee Manual, Adult Education Program, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, Virginia, 1982.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A CBE PROGRAM

A CBE program can be identified by examining its characteristics. The following list of characteristics have been divided into required, which comply with Virginia state CBE standards, and helpful characteristics.

Required

1. Course content is based upon required tasks/competencies. Competencies to be learned by the students are determined in advance of instruction by task analysis methods. The purpose of the task analysis is to find out what is required for success in employment or education. The content for the program is based on the results of the task analysis.

2. Performance objectives are developed for the program. The content of the program is developed and stated in the form of performance objectives. There is one performance objective for each task/competency. In addition to the performance objectives, enabling objectives are sometimes developed for CBE program.

3. The required competencies are specified to students prior to instruction. The specific requirements and content of the program, course, or unit of instruction are provided to the student prior to learning. This helps the student better understand, prior to learning, what is required and thus facilitates learning.

4. Student achievement is based upon demonstrated competency. The performance of skills is of prime importance in CBE. Whether the competency deals with skills, knowledge, or attitudes, the competency must be demonstrated at the minimal criteria for successful achievement to be recorded. This insures the acquisition of the necessary skills for employment by the student.

5. Criterion-referenced testing procedures are used to evaluate student performance. A criterion-reference measure is developed for each competency, and student performance is compared to a set standard. Student performance is evaluated to the pre-determined standard rather than other students' work.

6. Student achievement is recorded for articulation, pre-employment, and permanent records. A system is used to document the competencies achieved by each student. This information is critical to the students, teachers, and future employers.

(Continued)

Helpful

7. Individualized materials and methods are used to deliver instruction. The use of individualized materials and methods is very useful when students have varied backgrounds and needs. Modules and learning activity packages are normally used when instruction is individualized to meet the needs of the student.

8. Learning time is flexible. The student's rate of learning determines the time required to complete the program. Thus, slow learners are permitted to take additional time to gain competencies, while fast learners can proceed to advanced content.

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Horne, Ralph A., Guide for Implementing Competency-Based Education in Vocational Programs, Virginia Department of Education, Richmond, Virginia, 1981.

DEFINITIONS

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Assessment

Identifying the students' goals, interests, and needs in order to plan instruction.

Competency

The demonstrated ability, including knowledge, skills, or attitudes, to perform a role-relevant task.

Performance Objective

The description of how mastery of a competency will be demonstrated. It includes performance, condition, and criteria.

Performance: The specific behavior expected of the student.

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Enabling Objective

The identification of one thing a learner must be able to do or know in order to perform the competency.

Evaluation

Measuring student progress toward mastery of the competency.

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4. Based on	Recalled information--reflects knowledge about language	Demonstrated performance --reflects application of knowledge to life skill/ role

Autumn Keltner, Coordinator ABE/ESL, San Diego Community College District. San Diego, CA, 1984.

A/25

INSTRUCTIONS - REVIEW ACTIVITY A

Performance Objective: Using their notes, participants will explain in writing why CBE works in the ABE/ESL classroom. They will include a definition of CBE and at least three characteristics of adult learners.

The object of Review Activity A is to determine how well participants see the relationship between CBE and adult ESL learners.

The participants should be evaluated on the following:

(1) Definition of CBE

(2) Three characteristics of adult learners

(3) How an adult ESL class can be designed to accommodate both

REVIEW ACTIVITY A

Competency: Participants will be able to develop a statement which describes the compatibility of CBE and adult ESL.

Competency-based education provides a framework for organizing instruction in an ABE/ESL classroom. Basic life skills are taught as the learner develops the language needed to perform them. Below, explain how CBE works in the ESL classroom. Include a definition of CBE and at least three relevant characteristics of adult learners. (You may use your notes.)

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

MODULE _____

DATE _____

How do you rate this workshop?

_____Poor _____Fair _____Good _____Very Good _____Excellent

Which aspect of the workshop was most valuable to you?

Which aspect of the workshop was least valuable to you?

What suggestions do you have for improving the training?

Other comments:

MODULE B

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

Competency

Participants will be able to assess students' needs for planning CBE instruction.

Rationale

Planning instruction around students' needs is an integral part of CBE as well as an important aspect of teaching adults. If the curriculum reflects those needs, students are motivated to continue learning. Information gathered from a needs assessment can aid the teacher in choosing instructional content that is of interest and concern to the students.

Performance Objective

Having used a tool for needs assessment, participants will list at least three student needs and two language functions which will enable students to meet each need.

Enabling Objectives

Will list ways to assess students' needs.

Will develop a tool for assessing students' needs.

Will be able to adapt or use the tool developed in the workshop to assess own students.

Will identify the language functions which enable students to fulfill their needs.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS: BACKGROUND NOTES

Assessing Needs

Adult ESL students enroll in classes because they are not satisfied with how they are functioning in their everyday lives. As adults they come to school to meet immediate needs, and therefore are motivated when they see how their instruction is enabling them to succeed where before they had failed. Success breeds success.

In the CBE classroom, course content is learner-generated; teachers provide learning activities based on the needs and goals of their students. Teachers are responsible for providing the tools and resources their adult learners need in order to function competently in the world outside the classroom.

The first step in the CBE process is assessment. Programs conduct language proficiency assessments (placement tests) and programs or teachers conduct needs assessment. Through assessment, information about student needs, interests, skills, and goals is collected. This information is vital as we prepare to design class instruction.

In an adult classroom, we strive to provide instruction which is relevant to our students' lives and based on what they want to learn. A needs assessment gives teachers information from which they can determine the content of such relevant instruction. It may make a teacher more aware of her or his students' roles and activities outside the classroom. Thus, from an assessment, we can draw the role-relevant tasks and competencies which will form the basis of our students' instructional program.

Two sources of information may be tapped when assessing student needs: the students themselves and experts.

Students

Ask a student why she or he is coming to class and the answer will be "to learn English." This answer is not very useful when trying to determine course content. What teachers really want to know is for what purpose their students are learning English--how they feel knowing English will change their lives. A student need/interest questionnaire is a valuable assessment instrument for making that determination.

Ideally, questionnaires should be written in native language, especially when given to students of very low English proficiency. Since this is not always possible, however, simply worded questionnaires have also been used successfully in ESL classes. It is also a good idea to allow students to take the questionnaire home, thereby allowing someone who is more proficient in English to translate items for them.

The questionnaire may ask about interests, needs, or both. Students can be asked to agree or disagree, rank for level of importance, etc. Items may be lists of topics or sentence completions such as, "I need English to...," "I want English to...," "I don't understand how to...." The following are sections of questionnaires which have been used in ABE/ESL classes.

Topic	Very Inter-esting	Inter-esting	Not Inter-esting	No Opinion	Know Enough
Read job descriptions	3	2	1	0	+
Discuss how to look for a job	3	2	1	0	+
Read newspaper ads for apartments	3	2	1	0	+
Learn how to order and pay in a restaurant	3	2	1	0	+
Discuss how to exchange goods	3	2	1	0	+

	Need	Might Need	Don't Need
How to count money	___	___	___
Going to the doctor	___	___	___
Getting along with others on the job	___	___	___
Using schedules for buses, trains, and planes	___	___	___

What I Want to Know	How Important Is It?		
Language Goals	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Speaking.....	☐	☐	☐
Pronunciation.....	☐	☐	☐
Reading.....	☐	☐	☐
Information Goals			
How to use the telephone.....	☐	☐	☐
Citizenship.....	☐	☐	☐
Emergency services.....	☐	☐	☐

At the end of a student questionnaire, it is a good idea to leave space for free response from the student. There can be questions or sentence completion as follows:

- Is there anything you want to learn which is not on the list?
- What other topics do you want to know more about?
- Finish this sentence: I want to use English to _____.

Questionnaires may also be sent to students' employers (with the students' permission). This serves more than one purpose. You get another opinion of what a student needs, especially related to language skills and communication on the job. It may help the student at work if the supervisor knows she or he is going to school to improve her or his English skills (and perhaps job performance). The employer/worksite questionnaire can also serve as good public relations for the ESL program.

Items on an employer questionnaire might be rated in terms of frequency (all of the time, some of the time, none of the time) as follows:

	All	Some	None
Your employee can follow written directions	☐	☐	☐
Your employee can follow oral directions	☐	☐	☐
You can understand your employee when she/he talks	☐	☐	☐
Your employee socializes with other employees	☐	☐	☐

Experts

An expert is "someone who is very skillful or highly trained and informed in some special field." (Webster's New World Dictionary). If experience is the best teacher, then through experience we have become experts in the field of being an adult in the United States. As adults, we have encountered many of the same situations and filled the same roles as our students have. Our experience tells us what kind of interaction, verbal and nonverbal, occurs in these social contexts and so guides us in determining what students need to be able to do. Through our experience as teachers, we have learned about the special needs of non-native speakers of English living in the United States.

Social services and other community agencies and service providers are also experts who should be consulted when assessing student needs. From

them we can receive general information about the typical client with limited English proficiency or information which is population-specific or agency-specific (i.e., going to the clinic). Mutual assistance associations and other political and/or social organizations which cater to specific ethnic groups are also valuable resources which should be tapped for information.

Many state education departments have resource centers in one or more locations throughout the state. Through these centers, teachers can obtain studies, papers, curricula, and texts; and staff can usually locate what is not readily available. The Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D. C., is a non-profit resource center which has a great deal of information about different ethnic groups and adult ESL needs.

Evaluating the Results of a Needs Assessment

Talking to experts, reading relevant literature and questioning students are all part of the first step of a needs assessment. The second step is to evaluate the results to find out what you have learned about your students and to determine how this information can be applied in the classroom.

As teachers of competency-based adult ESL, we evaluate the information received from a needs assessment for the life, linguistic, and other needs of our students, and we ask the following questions:

(1) Is the need shared by a few, many, or most students?

(2) Is it an immediate need?

(3) Does it require a performance in English? If so,

- Does it build on what the students already know?
- Can the language be applied to other situations?

(4) If it does not require a performance in English,

- Does it require information which can become the context for language practice?

While it may be possible to "override" a student's "want to learn" for the time being (because it is beyond the student at a particular level or it is unrealistic for the community in which the student lives), we should always try to incorporate some aspect of what the student wants into our class. (For example: A student wants to go to college, but the program is not academic preparation or it will be a long time before the student is proficient enough to enroll in college-level ESL classes. One way to incorporate that student's goal in your class would be to bring in college application forms when working on filling out personal information forms.)

It is essential that an assessment of student needs be completed before the organization and planning of a class takes place. The tools we decide to

use to determine the student needs, interests, and goals is not of great importance. It does not matter if we use formal or informal means of information gathering, but we must assess. Through this process, instruction can be made relevant, and students will find both motivation and satisfaction in the classroom.

Functional/Notional Approach

The functional/notional approach grew out of the studies of the Council of Europe's modern language project. The project was established to improve and broaden the learning of foreign languages among adults in Europe. Specifically, the studies focused on the language and cultural information necessary for these adults to be able to communicate with native speakers of the target language. The Council attempted to classify the aspects of language to be learned based on what the students wanted to do with the language (functions) and on what meaning they wanted to convey (notions) rather than on grammar.

The focus of a functional approach is on the communicative purpose of speech. The setting and the situation of the communicative event are taken into account. Realistic tasks are created for the learner using everyday, real-life language. A basic premise is that learning takes place when content is meaningful to the learners--based on their needs and the usefulness of the content in real life.

This approach does not advocate one particular methodology over another, although there are certain implications for methodology. First of all, the students are viewed as active participants in the learning process. Content is based on their needs, and progress is monitored by them. The motivating factor is that students find the material useful to them. Second, basing the content on real needs, real tasks are created for the students. The language to be taught must be the real language of the situation. Third, content needs to be cyclical in nature. Transfer is not always automatic. Students need practice and exposure to various kinds of situations and activities to enhance the learning process. By adapting a cyclical approach, old material can be practiced and reviewed as new material is introduced.

These are the charateristics which make the functional approach particularly compatible with CBE/ESL. Both demand that instruction be student-centered, based on students' needs, and monitored by the students with the teacher as facilitator. Real language for real-life tasks forms the basis of content and is recycled throughout the curriculum.

Identifying Language Functions

A needs assessment will identify for us the roles and situations in which the students will participate. From these, we can predict with reasonable accuracy what kinds of communication will take place. The communication can be described in terms of language functions.

A language function is defined as the purpose of communication--what the speaker wants to do with the language. Examples include greeting, thanking, expressing opinions, asking for and giving advice. (See Handout B/5.) From context to context functions may repeat themselves. For example, we greet the receptionist in the doctor's office, our child's teacher at a PTA meeting, our neighbors and co-workers. We may advise our children what clothes to wear in stormy weather, our spouse what to do for a stomachache, a friend where to shop for the best buys. We can plan our lessons around the functions that the students need to master in order to fulfill their roles.

Once we have identified the language functions, we can determine the specific structure used to express those functions. A particular function may be expressed by more than one structure. To give advice, we can use the modal should, "You should see a doctor," as well as the conditional, "If I were you, I'd call a doctor." It is also probable that the same structure may be used to express more than one function. The imperative can be used to give advice, "Buy two while they're on sale," or to warn, "Look out!" Structure and vocabulary may also depend on extra-linguistic factors such as place, time, topic, level of formality, social roles. We may greet someone we have only recently met, "Hello. How are you?" and a co-worker with whom we are friendly, "Hi, how ya doin'?"

The presentation of this information must be organized into manageable chunks so that the learners are not overwhelmed. Students can practice the same function in many contexts, learning alternate ways of expression as they progress through the class. Functions form the connecting thread so that material previously studied is reviewed and reinforced as it is integrated with new material.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT/LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS RESOURCES

Behrens, Sophia, ed. From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults.

Bodman, Jean W., and Lanzano, Susan C. What ESL Students Want.

Brumfit, C. J., and Johnson, K. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching.

Findley, Charles A., and Nathan, Lynn A. "Functional Language Objectives in a Competency-Based ESL Curriculum."

Finnochiaro, Mary, and Brumfit, Christopher. The Functional-Notional Approach from Theory to Practice.

Littlewood, William. Communicative Language Teaching.

Parker, James T., and Taylor, Paul G., eds. The CB Reader.

Richterich, R., and Chancerel, J. L. Identifying the Needs of Adults Learning a Foreign Language.

Savignon, Sandra J., and Berns, Maggie S., eds. Initiatives in Communicative Teaching.

Van Ek, J. Threshold Level English.

Wilkins, D. Notional Syllabuses.

SUGGESTED FORMAT - MODULE B
NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
5 min.	Participants read competencies for this session	B/1: Needs Assessment and Language Functions
10 min.	Warm-Up Activity: Have participants work in pairs to write a dialog between an employer and employee in which the employee asks for time off. There should be no more than 3-4 exchanges (6-8 lines). These will be performed later and analyzed in the second half of the workshop. (See exercises on Discovering Functions)	
10 min.	Follow Up: Ask participants for responses students gave in answering why they are studying English. Point out that merely asking is not always that informative. Identify adult roles indicated by student responses.	
5 min.	Discuss the importance of needs assessment and how it relates to adult learners.	
25 min.	Discuss ways of assessing needs: Experts--ourselves, service providers, employers. Students--via interviews, questionnaires. Evaluate adult roles identified previously (adding some if needed) and ask for situations (contexts) where these roles are "found." Equate situation to student needs. Example: Parent--enrolling child in school, teacher conference, child care, buying clothes for children. Look at sample questionnaire items.	*Community Resources B/2: Sample items B/3: Student ESL Needs Questionnaire

*Prepare a list of resources available in your area. Include addresses and phone numbers.

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
25 min.	Questionnaire Activity: Participants should be divided into pairs or small groups according to the classes they teach. Ask them to write short questionnaires of 10 to 15 items that can be used with their students. They may use a previously identified format or one of their own. When finished, participants can share questionnaires.	B/4: Needs Questionnaire
10 min.	**BREAK**	
15 min.	Elicit examples of language functions from participants (see instructions for Discovering Functions, B/6). Present brief background information on the Council of Europe study and the functional/notional approach. Look over list of functions.	B/5: List of functions
40 min.	Discovering Functions Activity: See instructions B/6.	B/6: Discovering Functions
15 min.	Review roles and situations of learners. Ask participants to identify the language in terms of functions indicated by those situations.	
5 min.	Assignment: Ask participants to use their questionnaires with their students. If they are unable to make copies for distribution, they may modify the questionnaire by writing items on the board or asking the questions as part of an interview. Participants will need the information collected to complete Review Activity B during the next workshop.	
10 min.	Workshop Evaluation	B/8: Evaluation

N.B. Review Activity B will be completed at the beginning of the next workshop. Do not include Handout B/7 in the participant packet at this time.

MODULE B

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

Competency

Participants will be able to assess students' needs for planning CBE instruction.

Rationale

Planning instruction around students' needs is an integral part of CBE as well as an important aspect of teaching adults. If the curriculum reflects those needs, students are motivated to continue learning. Information gathered from a needs assessment can aid the teacher in choosing instructional content that is of interest and concern to the students.

Performance Objective

Having used a tool for needs assessment, participants will list at least three student needs and two language functions which will enable students to meet each need.

Enabling Objectives

Will list ways to assess students' needs.

Will develop a tool for assessing students' needs.

Will be able to adapt or use the tool developed in the workshop to assess own students.

Will identify the language functions which enable students to fulfill their needs.

SAMPLE ITEMS

Topic	Very Inter-esting	Inter-esting	Not Inter-esting	No Opinion	Know Enough
Read job descriptions	3	2	1	0	+
Discuss how to look for a job	3	2	1	0	+
Read newspaper ads for apartments	3	2	1	0	+
Learn how to order and pay in a restaurant	3	2	1	0	+
Discuss how to exchange goods	3	2	1	0	+

	Need	Might Need	Don't Need
How to count money	___	___	___
Going to the doctor	___	___	___
Getting along with others on the job	___	___	___
Using schedules for buses, trains, and planes	___	___	___

What I Want to Know	How Important Is It?		
Language Goals	Very Important	Important	Not Important
Speaking.....	☐	☐	☐
Pronunciation.....	☐	☐	☐
Reading.....	☐	☐	☐
Information Goals			
How to use the telephone.....	☐	☐	☐
Citizenship.....	☐	☐	☐
Emergency services.....	☐	☐	☐

STUDENT ESL NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Which of these places do you go to regularly?

_____hospital
_____social services
_____bank
_____supermarket
_____police station
_____library
_____other _____

_____post office
_____work
_____job counselor's office
_____ESL classes
_____children's school
_____daycare center

_____

2. Who goes with you to these places?

_____friend, member of family
_____sponsor
_____nobody
_____other _____

3. Do you have to use English in these places? _____Yes _____No

4. When you need help with English, who translates for you?

_____friend
_____son, daughter, or other member of family
_____sponsor
_____nobody

5. How do you get around?

_____I walk.
_____I take the subway.
_____Someone drives me.
_____I take the bus.
_____I drive

(Continued)

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6. What makes you nervous?

_____using the telephone

_____talking to your job counselor

_____looking for a job

_____talking to your coworkers

_____talking to your supervisor

_____going to the doctor

_____getting lost/needing to ask for directions

_____going to the supermarket

_____going to social services

_____looking for an apartment/house

_____talking to your landlord

_____talking to your neighbors

_____talking to people you don't know

_____using public transportation

_____other_____

_____

7. What are your long-term plans in the United States?

_____stay home

_____get a job

_____study skill training

_____study in college/ university

_____other_____

_____

Adapted from a student needs questionnaire developed by the International Institute of Boston MELT Project.

NEEDS QUESTIONNAIRE

Develop a questionnaire that you can use with your students. Think about the roles that your students play. Include 10-20 items. You can ask for need, interest, importance, etc. Make sure that items and instructions are easily understandable by the students. Include at least one free response question.

FUNCTIONS

Imparting and Seeking Factual Information

Identify self and others
Identify objects
Identify meaning of signs and symbols
Identify weather conditions
Identify time symbols
Express/inquire about time
Report information chronologically related
Report information causally related
Report descriptive information about location/direction
Report descriptive information about quantity/price
Report descriptive information about color/size
Correct information
Ask/answer requests for clarification
Request something (objects, information, assistance)
Ask/answer requests for information
Expand meaning of abbreviated messages

Expressing and Finding out Intellectual Attitudes

Express/inquire whether someone knows something
Express/inquire whether someone remembers something
Express/inquire about possibility/impossibility
Express/inquire about capability/incapability
Express/inquire about probability/improbability
Express a logical conclusion
Express/inquire about certainty/uncertainty
Express/inquire about obligation
Give/seek permission

Expressing and Finding out Emotional Attitudes

Express/inquire about likes/dislikes
Express/inquire about preference
Express/inquire about interest/disinterest
Express/report surprise
Express hope
Express fear/worry
Express satisfaction/dissatisfaction
Express/inquire about pain
Express sympathy
Express regret
Express gratitude
Express/inquire about wants/needs/intentions

(Continued)

Expressing and Finding out Moral Attitudes

Apologize
Accept an apology
Express/inquire about approval/disapproval

Getting Things Done (Suasion)

Advise someone to do something
Instruct (direct) someone to do something
Warn someone to take care or refrain from doing something
Ask someone to do something
Invite someone to do something
Suggest a course of action

Socializing

Greet people
Take leave (partings)
Introduce self and others
Give someone a compliment

INSTRUCTIONS--DISCOVERING FUNCTIONS

The purpose of these exercises is to familiarize the participants with language functions so that they can describe the kinds of communication that take place in situations identified by a student needs assessment.

Begin by eliciting examples of language functions from participants.

When we talk, we greet people, thank, express satisfaction, give advice...

I. Matching

Match the functions listed on the right to the utterances listed on the left. A function may be used more than once and an utterance may be classified as more than one function. Please point this out to participants if their answers do not reflect this.

Possible answers:

1. e, d, i	6. a, f	11. a
2. e, i	7. k, g	12. d, g
3. f, j	8. c, d	13. l
4. h	9. c	14. b, d
5. b	10. g	15. k

From this exercise, participants should realize:

- Language is complicated.
- It is difficult to determine functions without context. (Language out of context has no meaning.)
- One grammatical structure may be used to express more than one function.
- Paralinguistic and extralinguistic features play a role in determining function.

We need to organize this information into manageable chunks so that our students can learn.

II. Identify the Functions in the Dialog

Have two participants read the dialog out loud.

Go through it again line by line and identify functions.

A: Listen (getting attention), how about...(suggesting/inviting)

B: Thanks, but...(refusing)

A: No? What's the...(asking for explanation)

B: Oh, I'm just...(answering)

A: What do you mean...(asking for clarification)

B: I can't afford...(answering request for clarification)

A: So, why don't you...(suggesting)

B: Hmmm, that's...(accepting suggestion)
I could...(expressing possibility)

A: Or better yet, you could...(suggesting)

B: Yeah...(accepting). Do you know...(asking for location)

A: Uh-huh. It's on the...(giving location)

B: How do I...(asking for help/directions)

A. Take...(giving directions)

When Part II is finished, have pairs read the dialogs they wrote for the warm-up activity. Ask them to identify the functions in each dialog. Note that functions may differ even if the situation is the same, although there should be some overlap. The language functions depend on what the speaker wants to do with the language.

III. Create Dialogs

If there is enough time, have participants work in pairs to create a dialog using the functions listed.

DISCOVERING LANGUAGE FUNCTIONS

I. Matching

_____ 1.	Do you mind if I open the door?	a. Apologizing
_____ 2.	Could I borrow your stereo?	b. Inviting someone
_____ 3.	I just don't have the time.	c. Speculating
_____ 4.	That's not a bad idea.	d. Making a suggestion
_____ 5.	Would you like to meet us for for dinner?	e. Asking for permission
_____ 6.	I'm sorry, but I've already made other plans.	f. Refusing an invitation
_____ 7.	Excuse me, where's the court house?	g. Asking for clarification
_____ 8.	Perhaps you should see a doctor.	h. Accepting a suggestion
_____ 9.	Maybe you are catching cold.	i. Making a request
_____10.	Like what?	j. Rejecting a suggestion
_____11.	I didn't mean it.	k. Asking for help
_____12.	Why don't we take a break?	l. Introducing a request
_____13.	Could you do me a favor?	
_____14.	Let's go to Georgetown.	
_____15.	How do I get to the Capitol?	

II. Identify the functions in the following dialog.*

A: Listen, how about going to the Jets' game with me tonight?
B: Thanks, but I don't feel like going out tonight.
A: No? What's the matter?
B: Oh...I'm just depressed. I still haven't found a job, and I'm going to have to move....
A: What do you mean, move?
B: I can't afford my apartment any more.
A: So, why don't you get a roommate?
B: Hmmm, that's not a bad idea. I could put a notice on the bulletin board at school.
A: Or better yet, you could put an ad in the New York News.
B: Yeah. Do you know where the News is?
A: Uh-huh. It's on the corner of 38th Street and Sixth Avenue.
B: How do I get there?
A: Take the subway to 42nd Street, and you can walk from there.

*This dialog is from In Touch Book 2: Longman, Inc., New York, 1980.

(Continued)

III. **Create dialogs**

Directions: With a partner, please create a dialog incorporating the following functions:

Greeting, inquiring about (health and family)
Inquiring about (plans for the weekend)
Stalling
Making an invitation
Declining an invitation

INSTRUCTIONS--REVIEW ACTIVITY B

Performance Objective: Having used a tool for needs assessment, participants will list at least three student needs and two language functions which will enable their students to meet each need.

The object of Review Activity B is for participants to have an opportunity to take the information collected from a student needs assessment and use it to determine the content and language which will become the focus of instruction.

If any participants were not able to use a questionnaire with their students, they can "consult" themselves as experts and determine needs based on the roles they know their students fill.

Examples of appropriate answers:

Role	Need/Situation	Function
Patient	Getting a doctor's appointment	- Identify self - Express need
Worker	Telling supervisor work completed	- Report information chronologically related - Offer assistance
User of transportation	Going from one place to another	- Ask for/report descriptive information about location/direction - Express/inquire about time

REVIEW ACTIVITY B

Competency: Participants will be able to assess students' needs for planning CBE instruction.

Now that you have assessed your students' needs, choose three of those needs (situations in which your students must perform) and write two functions for each one.

Role	Need/Situation	Function

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

MODULE _____

DATE _____

How do you rate this workshop?

_____Poor _____Fair _____Good _____Very Good _____Excellent

Which aspect of the workshop was most valuable to you?

Which aspect of the workshop was least valuable to you?

What suggestions do you have for improving the training?

Other comments:

MODULE C

WRITING COMPETENCY-BASED OBJECTIVES

Competency

Participants will be able to write competencies and performance objectives for their classes.

Rationale

The first step in CBE is assessing the needs of the learners. Once these needs have been determined, they are expressed as concrete goals called competencies. The competencies describe the outcome of instruction. They can be expanded into performance objectives which describe how the learners will demonstrate that they have mastered the competency.

Writing competencies provides the teacher with direction for determining content. Making them known provides the students with a plan for attaining their goals. Performance objectives serve as guides for evaluation.

Performance Objective

Having determined the needs of their students, participants will choose three needs and write at least one competency and performance objective for each.

Enabling Objectives

Will identify role-relevant tasks.

Will distinguish between competencies and instructional activities.

Will identify the components of a performance objective.

WRITING COMPETENCY-BASED OBJECTIVES: BACKGROUND NOTES

A Fable

Once upon a time a Sea Horse gathered up his seven pieces of eight and cantered out to find his fortune. Before he had traveled very far, he met an Eel who said,

"Psst. Hey, bud. Where ya goin'?"

"I'm going out to find my fortune," replied the Sea Horse proudly.

"You're in luck," said the Eel. "For four pieces of eight you can have this speedy flipper, and then you'll be able to get there a lot faster."

"Gee, that's swell," said the Sea Horse, and paid the money and put on the flipper and slithered off at twice the speed. Soon he came upon a Sponge, who said,

"Psst. Hey, bud. Where ya goin'?"

"I'm going out to find my fortune," replied the Sea Horse.

"You're in luck," said the Sponge. "For a small fee I will let you have this jet-propelled scooter so that you will be able to travel a lot faster."

So the Sea Horse bought the scooter with his remaining money and went zooming through the sea five times as fast. Soon he came upon a Shark, who said,

"Psst. Hey, bud. Where ya goin'?"

"I'm going to find my fortune," replied the Sea Horse.

"You're in luck. If you'll take this short cut," said the Shark, pointing to his open mouth, "you'll save yourself a lot of time."

"Gee, thanks," said the Sea Horse, and zoomed off into the interior of the Shark, and was never heard from again.

Moral: If you're not sure where you are going, you're liable to end up someplace else.[1]

A second moral might be: if you are not sure where you are going, how are you going to know when you get there?

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[1]Robert F. Mager, Preparing Instructional Objectives. (Belmont, California: Pitman Learning, Inc., 1975), Preface.

Why We Need Objectives

"An objective is a description of a performance you want learners to be able to exhibit before you consider them competent. An objective describes an intended result of instruction, rather than the process of instruction itself."[2] Objectives form the foundation of an educational program and serve us in many ways.

For teachers, objectives serve as guides, directing the course to be taken to help students achieve their goals. Having clearly stated what the desired outcome of a course or unit or class session is to be, a teacher can design an appropriate plan of action. Objectives guide the teacher's selection of materials and activities.

Objectives also serve as guides for students. Inside and outside the classroom, people perform better when they know why they are doing something and toward what end they are working. Objectives guide students through the learning process. In a student-centered classroom, where objectives are learner-generated, objectives are used to show students how they are working toward their goals. They help keep students motivated by demonstrating how class activities relate to what the students wish to achieve.

Objectives keep students and teachers focused. Students are responsible for working toward a specific end, and objectives give them the plan to follow to stay on track. Teachers are responsible for providing their students with the resources and activities necessary to meet their needs and achieve their goals. Objectives help the teacher select materials and activities, thus keeping them on track as well.

Lastly, objectives serve as guides for evaluation. Given a statement of result--desired performance--teachers have something by which to judge students. (If you know where you are going, you will know when you have gotten there.)

Class design, management, and evaluation are all greatly aided by the use of clearly stated objectives. When these objectives are specified to the students before instruction, that instruction becomes more effective as students know what is expected of them. Good objectives are important in any classroom and essential in competency-based education.

Competency-Based Objectives

Competency is defined as the demonstrated ability to perform a role-relevant task. A written competency is an objective that describes the outcome of instruction--what the student will be able to do (performance). It is not enougn that a student will "know" how to do something; we need

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[2]Ibid., p. 5.

evidence of this knowledge. This evidence must be an observable behavior. The key to writing a good competency is to be sure that the behavior is clear and well-defined. It is best to avoid terms that are vague, such as know, understand, appreciate, and to use ones that are open to fewer interpretations, such as write, answer orally, spell correctly, match.

As we choose the behavior, we need to keep the task in mind. Is what we want the student to do appropriate to the role? Is the task authentic? For example, as a patient, the student would be expected to answer questions about an illness and its symptoms, but would not be expected to write them out for the doctor. A competency for this skill would most likely require that the student be able to describe the illness and its symptoms orally. However, as a class activity, we may ask the student to write these things down so that she/he can study them at home.

Once we know that we expect our students to be able to do, we need to consider how we are going to know when they have mastered it. To the expected performance, we can add the conditions under which students will demonstrate their performance and the criteria for acceptable performance. This statement is referred to as a performance objective. It serves as a basis for instructional design, and provides a guide for evaluating student progress.

Performance, conditions, and criteria are three characteristics of a useful performance objective. We have already discussed performance--the observable outcome of instruction. Conditions refer to the performance situation. They include what the learner will be allowed or denied while demonstrating mastery. For example, students may be asked to do something without the use of a dictionary, given a map, or using any reference materials. The criteria set the standard. They tell us how well we want the student to perform. It can be qualitative or quantitative.

Each of these characteristics is essential for conveying the intent of the writer to the reader. Sometimes performance objectives are written without specifying conditions or criteria. The same criteria may be applied to a set of several competencies, and therefore would be stated outside of the performance objectives. Conditions are often omitted when nothing is given to the student. However, the more that can be said about conditions and criteria, the better the intent of the performance objective will be communicated.

In summary, the following questions should be considered when writing a performance objective:

(1) What do I want the student to be able to do? (PERFORMANCE)

(2) What are the conditions under which the student should do it? (CONDITIONS)

(3) How well must the student perform for me to be satisfied? (CRITERIA)

(4) Can another competent person select a successful learner so that I would agree?[3]

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[3]Op. cit., p. 87.

WRITING COMPETENCY-BASED OBJECTIVES RESOURCES

Behrens, Sophia, ed. From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults.

Jarvis, Gilbert A., and Adams, Shirley J. Evaluating a Second Language Program. Washington, D. C.: Center for Applied Linguistics, 1979.

Mager, Robert F. Preparing Instructional Objectives.

Steiner, Florence. Performing with Objectives.

Valette, R., and Disick, R. Modern Language Performance Objectives and Individualization: A Handbook.

Van Duzer, Carol, and Mansoor, Inaam. The REEP Curriculum.

SUGGESTED FORMAT - MODULE C

WRITING COMPETENCY-BASED OBJECTIVES

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
5 min.	Participants read competencies.	C/1: Competencies
40 min.	Discuss needs questionnaires. Review Activity B: See instructions B/7.	B/7: Review Activity B
20 min.	Discuss the importance of objectives. Begin with Sea Horse Fable: See instructions. Review adult roles and situations. In CBE the situations become role-relevant tasks which are then written as competencies.	
10 min.	**BREAK**	
15 min.	Define competency with particular attention to observable performance. Activity: Performance vs. Activity: See instructions C/2.	C/2: Performance vs Activity
25 min.	Present the characteristics of a useful performance objective. Emphasize that the performance objective helps us determine when students have mastered the competency. Students can do what has been specified under the conditions and to the extent demanded by the criteria. Activity: Characteristics of a Performance Objective: See instructions C/3.	C/3: Characteristics of a Performance Objective
15 min.	Practice writing competencies and performance objectives together by having the participants identify roles and tasks and then expressing the tasks as competencies. Add conditions and criteria to create a performance objective. (See C/5)*	C/4: Designing Learning Around Competencies. C/5*: Writing CB Objectives: Review

*Handout C/5 is optional. May be used as a review.

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
5 min.	Assignment: Ask participants to bring to the next session ESL text(s) they are using or have used in the past.	
30 min.	Review Activity C: See instructions C/6.	C/6: Review Activity C
10 min.	Workshop Evaluation	C/7: Evaluation

MODULE C

WRITING COMPETENCY-BASED OBJECTIVES

Competency

Participants will be able to write competencies and performance objectives for their classes.

Rationale

The first step in CBE is assessing the needs of the learners. Once these needs have been determined, they are expressed as concrete goals called competencies. The competencies describe the outcome of instruction. They can be expanded into performance objectives which describe how the learners will demonstrate that they have mastered the competency.

Writing competencies provides the teacher with direction for determining content. Making them known provides the students with a plan for attaining their goals. Performance objectives serve as guides for evaluation.

Performance Objective

Having determined the needs of their students, participants will choose three needs and write at least one competency and performance objective for each.

Enabling Objectives

Will identify role-relevant tasks.

Will distinguish between competencies and instructional activities.

Will identify the components of a performance objective.

INSTRUCTIONS--SEA HORSE FABLE

Read this fable to participants as an introduction to the importance of objectives. After you read it, point out the two morals: If you're not sure where you're going, you're liable to end up some place else. If you're not sure where you're going, you're not going to know when you get there.

Once upon a time a Sea Horse gathered up his seven pieces of eight and cantered out to find his fortune. Before he had traveled very far, he met an Eel who said,

"Psst. Hey, bud. Where ya goin'?"

"I'm going out to find my fortune," replied the Sea Horse proudly.

"You're in luck," said the Eel. "For four pieces of eight you can have this speedy flipper, and then you'll be able to get there a lot faster."

"Gee, that's swell," said the Sea Horse, and paid the money and put on the flipper and slithered off at twice the speed. Soon he came upon a Sponge, who said,

"Psst. Hey, bud. Where ya goin'?"

"I'm going out to find my fortune," replied the Sea Horse.

"You're in luck," said the Sponge. "For a small fee I will let you have this jet-propelled scooter so that you will be able to travel a lot faster."

So the Sea Horse bought the scooter with his remaining money and went zooming through the sea five times as fast. Soon he came upon a Shark, who said,

"Psst. Hey, bud. Where ya goin'?"

"I'm going to find my fortune," replied the Sea Horse.

"You're in luck. If you'll take this short cut," said the Shark, pointing to his open mouth, "you'll save yourself a lot of time."

"Gee, thanks," said the Sea Horse, and zoomed off into the interior of the Shark, and was never heard from again.

INSTRUCTIONS: PERFORMANCE VS ACTIVITY

This activity will enable participants to distinguish between performance (competency) and activity.

Pre-Activity

On the blackboard write an example of one statement that describes a student activity and one that describes a student performance.

To see a filmstrip about going to the doctor.

To complete a medical history form.

Discuss which one describes student performance--an observable outcome of instruction (completing the form). Point out that seeing a filmstrip may be a valuable activity, but it does not tell us what the students know about the subject or what they can do. Filling out a medical history is part of the procedure that the students will go through when they visit a clinic or doctor's office. It is one of the tasks they should be able to do in their role as patient.

Give additional examples if needed.

Activity

Participants complete Handout C/2. List the answers on the board (1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10). Discuss responses. The participants should go back and circle the performance in each of the correct answers.

PERFORMANCE VS ACTIVITY

The following are examples of student behavior. Please check the six that indicate demonstrated performance.

_____ 1. To answer questions about a reading on shopping.

_____ 2. To study the clothing vocabulary on Page 7.

_____ 3. To listen to a taped job interview.

_____ 4. To write a shopping list.

_____ 5. To name ten parts of the body.

_____ 6. To attend a lecture on career exploration.

_____ 7. To spell one's name orally.

_____ 8. To fill out a job application with no mistakes.

_____ 9. To watch a filmstrip about going to the doctor.

_____10. To describe a picture from a magazine.

INSTRUCTIONS: CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

This activity will enable participants to identify the characteristics of performance objectives and to recognize well-written ones.

Pre-Activity

On the board, write an example of a performance objective that has all three characteristics.

Using a subway map, students will point to the two metro stops nearest the White House.

Ask the participant to identify the performance (point), the conditions (using a map), and the criteria (two, nearest).

Do more examples together if necessary.

Activity

Participants complete handout C/3. Discuss responses.

	Perf.	Cond.	Crit.	
1.	x	x		(Perf: differentiate; Cond: given list)
2.	x		x	(Perf: describe; Crit: four)
3.				See notes below.
4.	x		x	(Perf: locate; Crit: four buildings listed)
5.				See notes below.
6.	x	x	x	(Perf: calculate/state; Cond: given; Crit: more econ)
7.	x		x	(Perf: write; Crit: all)
8.	x	x	x	(Perf: identify; Cond: using ref; Crit: every, 10)

1. May wish to specify how they will differentiate--orally, in writing. For criteria, assume 100%, or specify.

2. No conditions are specified. Assume no references are permitted.

3. False condition: given 20 minutes of instruction. A condition is what the students will be given or denied at the time of performance.

   There is no observable performance. How do we know that the students understand?

4. Is it possible to specify how the students will locate (by pointing?) A condition could be added if the teacher provides a map.

5. How do we know what the students have learned? Change the verb to make and then we have a performance.

6. Assume 100% accuracy in calculation or would not get the more economical purchase correct.

7. Does the teacher provide the lease? Do the students do this from recall? A condition could be added.

8. Example of a good objective.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE

Read the statements below. Place a check mark in the appropriate column to indicate any characteristic of a useful competency that you find in each.

	Perf.	Cond.	Crit.
1. Given a list of foods, will differentiate among dairy products, produce, and meats.	___	___	___
2. Will describe four habits that promote good health and four that are a detriment to one's health.	___	___	___
3. Given 20 minutes of instruction and a reading exercise, will develop an understanding of the difference between American marriage customs and those of the student's native country.	___	___	___
4. Will locate correctly the following four buildings: hospital, supermarket, drugstore, school.	___	___	___
5. The student will learn how to make a doctor's appointment.	___	___	___
6. Given two samples of a food item of equal quality but differing in brand, quantity, and price, will calculate the unit price of each and state which is the more economical purchase.	___	___	___
7. Will write all of the obligations in an apartment rental lease.	___	___	___
8. Using any reference materials, will identify correctly every abbreviation in ten job ads.	___	___	___

DESIGNING LEARNING AROUND COMPETENCIES

Competency: Demonstrated ability to perform a role-relevant task.

- determined by assessing goals, needs, desired of students.
- specifies what students must be able to do to meet their goals.
- assists the instructor in selecting content, materials, strategies, and evaluation techniques.
- provides the teacher and students with direction.

How are we going to know when our students achieve the competency?

- They will meet the requirements of the performance objective.
- When preparing the performance objective, ask yourself:
  1. What do I want the students to be able to do? (performance)
  2. What are the important conditions/constraints under which I want them to perform? (conditions)
  3. How well must students perform for me to be satisfied? (criteria)
  4. Could another competent person select successful learners so that I would be satisfied? (clear, concise, well-defined)

WRITING COMPETENCY-BASED OBJECTIVES: REVIEW

1. An OBJECTIVE is a description of a performance you want learners to exhibit before you consider them competent.

2. A COMPETENCY is the demonstrated ability fo perform a role-relevant task. (It is related to CBE's life skill necessary to function proficiently in society.)

   A competency is a general statement of performance--what we want our students to do as a result of instruction.

3. PERFORMANCE is the observable outcome of instruction--how the students are to demonstrate mastery of a competency.

   Terms Used to Express Performance

write	interpret	compare	contrast
state	locate	use	spell
identify	match	fill out	ask/answer
name	list	sort	compute
define	make	describe	discuss

   In the following competencies, the performance is circled:

   -- Students will be able to (make) medical appointments.

   -- Students will be able to (interpret) housing ads.

   -- Students will be able to (locate) bus stops.

   Ask yourself what the students are expected to do in the competencies listed below and circle the performance.

   (1) Students will be able to fill out a time sheet.

   (2) Students will be able to use a bus schedule.

   (3) Students will be able to match illnesses and health problems with medical specialists.

   (4) Students will be able to spell their names.

4. Competencies are useful as general statements of desired outcomes, but can be expanded to more specific descriptions of performance. These "expanded competencies" are called PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES.

(Continued)

We develop performance objectives by starting with a competency (PERFORMANCE) and adding CONDITIONS under which the student will perform and the CRITERIA of acceptable performance.

PERFORMANCE: the observable outcome of instruction (see above)

CONDITION: the performance situation--what the learner will be allowed or denied--what the learner may or may not use to assist in performance

Terms Used to Express Condition

given a map	given a list of...	without reference materials
using notes	given a picture of...	given a situation
without using notes	using a bilingual guide	given a size chart
using a bus schedule	using a tape measure	

In the following performance objectives, the condition is underlined.

-- Using a health problem specified by the teacher, students will make a doctor/dentist appointment giving information, including name, telephone number, and nature of illness.

-- Given a housing ad from level text, students will ask and answer questions on the apartment for rent, including number of rooms, utilities provided, location, and the rent.

-- Given a destination, students will ask where the bus stop is.

Ask yourself what the students are being allowed or denied in the performance objectives below and underline the condition.

(1) Given a blank time sheet and hypothetical data, students will accurately list days and hours worked during a one-week period.

(2) Given a bus schedule and the time and location of a job interview, students will report to the class which bus they would take to get to the interview on time.

(3) Using the phone book, students will point to and read aloud the numbers for the fire and police in the towns where they live.

(4) Students will ask and answer questions about dosages on the labels of medicines provided by the teacher.

(Continued)

CRITERIA: The standard by which performance is evaluated--how well we want the learners to perform, the measure of acceptable performance--may be qualitative or quantitative

Terms Used to Express Criteria

all	correctly
every	with no mistakes
10	using the language taught
appropriate	including...
4 out of 5	legibly

In the following performance objectives, the criteria is boxed.

-- Using a health problem specified by the teacher, students will make a doctor/dentist appointment giving appropriate information including name, telephone number, and nature of illness.

-- Given a housing ad from level text, students will ask and answer questions on the apartment for rent, including number of rooms, utilities provided, location, and rent.

-- Given a blank time sheet and hypothetical data, students will accurately list days and hours worked during a one-week period.

Ask yourself how you would measure/evaluate the performance in the performance objectives below and box the criteria.

(1) Students will explain the difference between prescription and nonprescription drugs, including how each is purchased.

(2) Students will greet and introduce people using appropriate forms of address and introduction.

(3) Using their biodata forms, students will fill out a job application form completely.

(4) Given a bus schedule and the time and location of a job interview, students will report to the class which bus they would take to get to the interview on time.

C/19

(Continued)

Sometimes performance objectives are written without specifying conditions or criteria. This happens when nothing is given to the student (i.e., the condition is "without any assistance, books, notes, etc.") or the conditions or criteria have been previously stated or are understood. (Condition: in a classroom simulation; criteria: correctly, using the language taught.)

Competencies with Performance Objectives

-- Students will be able to make medical appointments.

> Using a health problem specified by the teacher, students will make a doctor/dentist appointment, giving information including name, phone number, and nature of illness.

-- Students will interpret housing ads.

> Given a housing ad from level text, students will ask and answer questions on the apartment for rent, including number of rooms, utilities provided, location, and rent.

-- Students will be able to locate bus stops.

> Given a destination, students will ask where the bus stop is.

-- Students will be able to fill out time sheets.

> Given a blank time sheet and hypothetical data, students will accurately list days and hours worked during a one-week period.

As a general statement of performance, a competency may cross many levels. Performance objectives, however, describe what is expected at different levels. The following two examples demonstrate how one competency can be performed at three different levels.

Competency: Students will be able to use a map

Performance Objectives

Level 1 Given a grid map, students will locate points on the map specified by the teacher by pointing to the location and repeating its name.

Level 2 Given a grid map, students will give directions from one point to another as specified by the teacher.

Level 3 Given a map, students will instruct each other how to go between two points specified by the teacher.

(Continued)

Competency: Students will be able to interpret food ads

Performance Objectives

Level 1	Given food ads from a level text, students will ask and answer questions about the prices of the items advertised.
Level 2	Given a newspaper food ad, students will ask and answer questions about the prices of the items advertised.
Level 3	Given two newspaper food ads and a shopping list including ad items, students will compare the ads with items on their lists and determine where they will shop. They must defend their answers.

* * * * * * *

The Birth of a Competency:

Roles ⟶ Situations ⟶ Tasks ⟶ Competencies (role-relevant tasks)

Role	Situation	Task	Competency
Patient	Going to a doctor	Make appointment	Students will be able to make a doctor's appointment
Job Seeker	Applying for a job	Fill out application forms	Students will be able to fill our job application forms
Tenant	Need something fixed	Report problem to landlord	Students will be able to describe problems in home or apartment

INSTRUCTIONS--REVIEW ACTIVITY C

Performance Objective

Having determined the needs of their students, participants will choose three needs and write at least three competencies and performance objectives for each.

Prior to this module, participants were asked to identify adult roles and needs. In Review Activity C, they demonstrate their ability to use these needs to determine the role-relevant tasks, competencies, which will guide their instructional design.

Examples of Appropriate Answers

Need	Buy food
Competency	Students will be able to read a newspaper food ad
Performance Objective	Given an ad from a level text, students will ask and answer questions about the cost of food items
Need	Get around
Competency	Students will be able to use a map
Performance Objective	Given a map, students will instruct each other how to go between two points specified by the teacher

REVIEW ACTIVITY C

Competency: Participants will be able to write competencies and performance objectives for their classes.

Choose three student needs and write competencies and performance objectives which will enable students to meet each need.

Competency = performance

Performance Objective = condition, performance, criteria

1. NEED:

   COMPETENCY:

   PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

2. NEED:

   COMPETENCY:

   PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

3. NEED:

   COMPETENCY:

   PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

MODULE _____

DATE _____

How do you rate this workshop?

_____Poor _____Fair _____Good _____Very Good _____Excellent

Which aspect of the workshop was most valuable to you?

Which aspect of the workshop was least valuable to you?

What suggestions do you have for improving the training?

Other comments:

MODULE D

PLANNING INSTRUCTION

Competency

Participants will be able to design effective CBE instruction for the accomplishment of class competencies.

Rationale

In CBE, needs are determined and then expressed as competencies. Next, it is necessary to break the competencies into units of study. In an adult ESL class, we are particularly concerned with linguistic skills and information needed for the students to achieve the competency. These skills and information are attained through the instructional activities and materials used in class.

Performance Objective

Having chosen a competency and using any materials, participants will develop at least two instructional activities which will enable their students to achieve the competency. They should include a rationale for selecting these activities.

Enabling Objectives

Will analyze a competency for linguistic and extra-linguistic skills necessary to complete the task.

Will identify learning activities appropriate for use in an adult CBE classroom.

Will identify characteristics of materials appropriate for use in an adult CBE classroom.

PLANNING INSTRUCTION: BACKGROUND NOTES

Organizing Instruction

The roles and situations that are identified in a needs assessment provide natural contexts around which to organize lessons. The tasks indicated by those situations and then written as competencies form the basis of content. The competencies are analyzed for language and other skills that the students will need in order to achieve mastery. Two factors should be considered when organizing this information into instructional units: the language proficiency level of the students and the importance of recycling material that is being learned.

Even when an adult ESL program can provide instruction for more than one class, adult ESL classes are often multi-level. Competency-based education works well in such classes. It is possible for an entire class to be working on the same competency but for groups within that class to be working on different performance objectives, i.e., developing different skills according to the students' varying abilities. For example, reading a map to beginning students may mean just pointing to a location specified by the teacher. To higher level students, it may mean using the map to follow or give directions. There is also a difference in language skill. For the beginning students in this particular case, the language skill is receptive--pointing as a response to a question/command "Where is the library?"/"Show me the corner of Fourth and Main." For the higher students, the language is productive--saying, "Go to the next traffic light and turn left."

Transfer of skill from native language to target language or from one topic to another within the target language is not automatic. In order to be internalized, the language being taught should be recycled and integrated with new material to provide many opportunities for practice and use. The problems of open-entry and chronic absenteeism are lessened through recycling. Recycling eliminates unnecessary repetition, yet provides the opportunity to learn the language skills that were introduced in previous units. For example, a language function can be introduced in one unit as being expressed through a certain structure. Alternate ways of expresssing that same function can then be presented in other units and/or at other levels, along with a review of the structure previously studied.

Designing Activities

Recent trends in ESL methodology have shown a moving away from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered instruction (e.g., Silent Way, Counselling Learning). The teacher facilitates learning by acting as a resource for students, a guide, a monitor, and a co-communicator. Students have an active role in the learning process and are responsible for the learning which is to take place.

The goal of the CBE/ESL classroom is to obtain the linguistic and other skills needed in order to function competently in the world outside. The language learned builds toward mastery of a competency. Instructional activities give students practice which can be applied in the real world--practice which can be transferred for use in real situations.

When designing instructional activities, there are a number of factors which must be considered:

- Activities should always be building blocks to the achievement of a competency. The relation of the activity to that competency should be clear to the teacher and the students.

- The language and practice within an activity should be meaningful. Even the most basic drills can be done within a real context.

- Students should be learning language which is authentic--language they will hear and use in the world outside their classroom.

- Activities should include cultural information. In CBE/ESL we are teaching linguistic and other skills needed to function in the world. Under "other" we include using polite forms of address, reading maps, waiting in line, etc.

- Activities should allow for students' creative expression. There should be room for experimentation and improvisation on the part of the learner.

- As they complete an activity, students should have a sense of accomplishment, a feeling they have achieved something. They should see how practicing a skill has led to being able to use that skill.

- Activities should be practical for the students, the program, and the teacher. They should be within the range of what the learners can do. The program has the resources needed to do them. For an activity to be practical for a teacher, its preparation should not demand a lot of time or energy, and it should be easily adaptable for use in more than one class, more than one context.

As language teachers, we are accustomed to focusing on linguistic form. Since the ultimate goal of most adult language learners is communication, in the adult language classroom the focus should be on meaning. This does not mean that linguistic form is unimportant; having control over the structural system of a language is necessary for communication. However, we want to go beyond structure and take into account other aspects of communication.

As we move from form to meaning, we come closer to real communication. "...We can define the goal of foreign language teaching in the following terms: to extend the range of communication situations in which the learner can perform with focus on meaning, without being hindered by the attention he must pay to linguistic form."[1]

Choosing Materials

Materials which are compatible with a competency-based program are not always easy to find. Competency-based ESL materials are even more scarce. And while teachers may not always be given the opportunity to select the basic texts for the classes they teach, it is important to know what the characteristics of appropriate materials are. These characteristics should be kept in mind when choosing supplementary materials, developing materials, and evaluating lessons and exercises in core (required) texts.

We want materials which are adult in nature. Illustrations and subject matter should be mature and relevant to the present and future needs of the learners. Topics should be interesting, varied, and intellectually stimulating. Due to the physical characteristics of adult learners, graphics should be clear, print easy to read, and pages uncluttered.

As grammar is not an end in itself, we are looking for materials which emphasize authentic spoken language, the language native speakers use. All exercises and drills must be meaningful, not mindless practice of patterns. Content was once used only as a means for illustrating grammatical structure, now we want materials which use real-life situations as their starting point--materials which draw their linguistic content from context.

Cultural information should also be included in adult ESL materials. At first the learner needs coping skills information which will be helpful in day-to-day living. As the learner advances, this cultural information may include attitudes, customs, history, and government. There is much more involved in living in a new country than learning the language.

Many adult ESL programs are open entry/open exit. Materials in these classrooms should be able to be used with relative ease. Students should be able to understand directions with little assistance, and the purpose of each lesson, activity, and exercise should be clear to both teacher and student. Texts which recycle information are especially valuable in open entry programs.

The materials used should be easy to adapt for the needs of a particular class or group of students. Items should be able to be added or deleted without destroying the original lesson. Ideally there will be activities which lend themselves to small group work and individualized work.

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[1]William Littlewood, Communicative Language Teaching. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 89.

Materials should be encouraging and enjoyable for both the student and teacher. The learner should feel that she or he is making progress, achieving something. The teacher should feel comfortable using the materials. It is helpful to have a teacher's manual that gives the rationale for the text and many illustrative ways in which the materials can be used.

In a competency-based classroom, materials should specify the objectives for each unit or lesson and provide some system for evaluating student performance. The objectives describe for student and teacher the desired outcome of the unit or lesson. The evaluation tool (checklist, test, etc.) will give the student and teacher a means for verifying if that desired outcome has been achieved and a way to chart progress.

PLANNING INSTRUCTION RESOURCES

Bartley, Diana E., ed. The Adult Basic Education TESOL Handbook.

Behrens, Sophia, ed. From the Classroom to the Workplace: Teaching ESL to Adults.

Brumfit, C. B., and Johnson, K. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching.

Celce-Murcia, Marianne, and McIntosh, Lois, eds. Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language.

Croft, Kenneth, ed. Readings on English as a Second Language.

Elson, Nicholas, ed. Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults: Methodology.

Finocchiaro, Mary, and Brumfit, Christopher. The Functional-Notional Approach from Theory to Practice.

Ilyin, Donna, and Tragardh, Thomas. Classroom Practices in Adult ESL.

Littlewood, William. Communicative Language Teaching.

Munby, John. Communicative Syllabus Design.

Savignon, Sandra J., and Berns, Maggie S., eds. Initiatives in Communicative Teaching.

Stevick, Earl. Adapting and Writing Language Lessons.

SUGGESTED FORMAT: MODULE D

PLANNING INSTRUCTIONS

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
5 min.	Participants read competencies.	D/1: Competencies
15 min.	Discuss what to teach by reviewing the CBE process from role to competency/performance objective to language. Elicit roles from participants. Together choose two or three roles and write a competency for each on the board. Have participants identify functions and structures for each competency.	
10 min.	Discuss organizing this material by asking participants what might be presented at a lower level and at a higher level. Point out that choosing what to teach depends on immediacy of need, what students already know, and the complexity of the idea/language (Handout D/2). Emphasize the need to recycle (D/3). Discuss ways to plan content for a unit of instruction (D/4).	D/2: Competencies with Performance Objectives D/3: Recycling D/4: REEP Curriculum
30 min.	Discuss how communicative activities relate to adult ESL and CBE. Point out the shift in focus from form to content. Look at the criteria for activities (D/5). Name and elicit appropriate activities for CBE/ESL, remarking on how the criteria are being met. If time permits, demonstrate the activities with participants playing the role of "student."	D/5: Criteria for CBE/ESL Instructional Activities
20 min.	Elicit characteristics of materials appropriate to adult learners. Write these characteristics on board, filling in any that are missed. Show texts which do or do not meet criteria. Ask participants to use the checklist (D/6) and the materials evaluation form (D/7) to evaluate the materials they brought with them.	D/6: Materials Evaluation D/7: Materials Checklist

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
10 min.	**BREAK**	
15 min.	Present a sample lesson plan. See Instructions D/8.	*D/8: Sample Lesson
25 min.	Practice identifying activities and materials that will help students achieve competencies. Ask participants to suggest competencies and to propose activities and materials they would use to teach and practice. Relate the activities/materials to the criteria.	
30 min.	Review Activity D: See Instructions D/9.	D/9: Review Activity D
10 min.	Assignment: Ask participants to think about a student need around which they will plan a lesson in the next workshop.	
10 min.	Workshop evaluation	D/10: Evaluation

*You may use this lesson plan or one of your own choosing.

MODULE D

PLANNING INSTRUCTION

Competency

Participants will be able to design effective CBE instruction for the accomplishment of class competencies.

Rationale

In CBE, needs are determined and then expressed as competencies. Next, it is necessary to break the competencies into units of study. In an adult ESL class, we are particularly concerned with linguistic skills and information needed for the students to achieve the competency. These skills and information are attained through the instructional activities and materials used in class.

Performance Objective

Having chosen a competency and using any materials, participants will develop at least two instructional activities which will enable their students to achieve the competency. They should include a rationale for selecting these activities.

Enabling Objectives

Will analyze a competency for linguistic and extra-linguistic skills necessary to complete the task.

Will identify learning activities appropriate for use in an adult CBE classroom.

Will identify characteristics of materials appropriate for use in an adult CBE classroom.

COMPETENCIES WITH PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Competency: Students will be able to use a map

Level 1

Given a grid map, students will be able to locate points specified by the teacher by pointing to a location and repeating its name.

Instruct others to do something: (receptive)
--Teacher: Show me the corner of 8th Road and Arlington Boulevard. Point to the library.

Level 2

Given a grid map, students will be able to give directions from one point to another as requested by the teacher.

Instruct others to do something: (imperatives)
--Turn right. Walk two blocks.
Report descriptive information about location: (prepositions of place)
--It's on Wilson Boulevard across from the gas station.

Level 3

Given a map, students will be able to instruct each other how to go between two points specified by the teacher.

Instruct others to do something: (imperatives/adverbials of time as sequence signals)
--Go to the end of the block and then turn right onto Wilson Boulevard.
Report descriptive information about location:
--It's two blocks north of the school on the corner of 17th and Pierce.

RECYCLING

Functions and structures are recycled throughout topics and across levels so that students are exposed to alternate ways to express a function in a variety of contexts.

Function: Advising someone to do something

Level B-1

Time/Weather	Health
Take your umbrella.	Take two aspirin.
	You should take two aspirin.

Level B-2

Telephone	Housing	Employment
Call the operator for the number.	I think you should call the manager.	Why don't you call for more information?
You should look in the telephone book first.	Why don't you call the plumber?	You could call for more information.

Level B-3

Health	Transportation	Clothing/Employment
You should brush your teeth three times a day.	If you want to be there by 9:00, you should take the 8:00 bus.	If I were you, I'd wear a suit.
Take these pills until the fever goes down.		
Call the doctor if the fever doesn't go down.		

TRANSPORTATION

Level B-2

Function	Example	Structure	Related Items
Ask and answer requests for factual information	How do you come to school? I take the Number 10 bus and transfer to 1A.	Conjunction and	Bus schedule
Express wants/needs/ intentions	I need a transfer. What bus do I take? I want to go to Pittsburgh.	Verbs: present tense want + to + verb	Bus schedule Telephone skills
Request additional information and clarification	Repeat please. Say that again, please. Does it also stop in Philadelphia?	 Also, too.	
Report information chronologically related	There is a bus every hour on the hour. There are 10 buses per day.	There is/are	Bus schedule
Identify the meaning of signs and symbols	(See below)		Traffic signs
Warn someone to take care or to refrain from doing something	Be careful! Why? It says "DON'T WALK."		Traffic signs
Express/inquire about possibility/ impossibility	If you take the Number 10 bus, you can get off at Glebe Road. If I take the 4:15 bus, will I be in Washington by 9:30?	If clause + can/will	Bus schedule
Instruct someone to do something	Turn right. Walk two blocks.	Imperative	Map reading Geographical direction: north, south, etc.

Survival Competencies

By the end of the instructional period, students' achievement will have been measured by their ability to perform the following tasks, using the language taught:

-- Students will be able to ask and answer questions about how they get around town.

-- Given a bus schedule for a local route, students will be able to report to the class on departure and arrival times, length of trip, and number of stops.

-- Students will be able to call for bus fare and schedule information, as directed by the teacher, from school to a point of interest in Washington, D. C., or Arlington, and report the information back to the class.

-- Students will be able to identify traffic signs by matching the sign with the written word and by explaining orally the meaning of each.

-- Given a grid map, students will be able to give directions from one point to another as requested by the teacher.

CRITERIA FOR CBE/ESL INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Consistent with Competencies

   - Activities should assist learner achieve competency. They are "enabling."

2. Practice is Meaningful

   - Drills are contextualized.

3. Language Can Be Applied in the Real World

   - Students are using authentic language.

4. Include Cultural Information

   - Students are learning nonlinguistic as well as linguistic information.

5. Allow for Creative Expression

   - There is room for learner experimentation and improvisation.

6. Sense of Achievement

   - At the end of an activity, learner feels she or he has accomplished something.

7. Practical

   - It is within the range of what the learner can do.
   - The program has the resources needed for the activity.
   - The teacher has the time and energy to prepare it, and the activity can be used more than once.

MATERIALS EVALUATION FORM

Materials Reviewed: _____

Author(s): _____

Check the criteria which this material satisfies:

____ Clearly stated objectives

____ Authentic spoken English

____ Practical written English

____ Clear presentation of language structure

____ Face validity for students

____ Valid preparation for students' future

____ Culturally informative

____ Friendly and encouraging

____ Meaningful and useful exercises

____ Evaluation activities which measure progress/performance

____ Appropriate for your teaching style

____ Clear guidelines for your use as a teacher

Considering this material's overall appropriateness for your program, could it be a (1) primary text, (2) a secondary text (used only for certain topics), or (3) of no use at all? _____

What levels, if any, is this material particularly appropriate for?

_____

What topics, if any, is this material particularly appropriate for?

_____

MATERIALS CHECKLIST

What to Look for in CBE/ESL Materials

When choosing texts and other materials for use in an adult CBE/ESL class, look for affirmative answers to these questions:

1. Are objectives clearly stated for teachers and students?
2. Is authentic language emphasized?
3. Is the focus on communication rather than grammar?
4. Are drills meaningful rather than mechanical?
5. Will the text meet the needs of the students? Does it reflect their lifestyles?
6. Is relevant cultural information provided?
7. Is the content adult?
8. Are graphics clear and format uncluttered?
9. Is the expense of the text or materials within student or program means?
10. Is there some kind of tool which can be used for evaluating student performance and a way to chart student progress?
11. Is there a manual or some guidelines for using the text?
12. Would you feel comfortable using these materials?

INSTRUCTIONS--LESSON PLAN

By this time, participants will be anxious to see how all that they have been discussing fits together in relation to classroom practice. It would be ideal if they could see, live or on tape, a CBE/ESL class in session. If that is not possible in your area, then participants should at least be "walked through" a lesson plan.

The plan included here is by no means prescriptive. You may substitute a CB lesson that you have worked with before. It is important to point out to participants how the lesson follows the steps of the CBE process by identifying student need (why we teach), specifying content (what we teach), and providing activities for practice and use (how we teach).

Notes on D/8

A needs assessment has identified the ability to use the public transportation system as a student need.

The competency is stated at the beginning along with the functions and structures to be highlighted and the materials needed. The first two functions represent a review for the students. Inquiring about possibility using the present real conditional is new.

I. Announcements. This field trip is an important part of the instructional unit on using transportation. It involves riding public transportation and provides an opportunity for the students to apply what they are learning in class as they themselves use schedules to plan the route and timing of the trip later in the week.

Review. This is not the first lesson in the unit. Students are already familiar with the public transportation that is available in their area and have practiced dialogs about schedule information and taking the bus. They have a base on which to begin the discussion that follows.

II. Bus Schedules. A presentation on bus schedules should contain more information than times, route, and fares. Cultural information such as the importance of time, how routes/buses are named and numbered, and holidays can be included. This information gives students a chance to ask and answer requests for information.

If the schedule has a route map, the teacher may want to work on map-reading skills, depending on the students' abilities.

The teacher should guide the discussion of the weekday schedule, but allow the students to do most of the talking. Then study the structure that is the focus of today's lesson. The schedule itself provides a context for practicing this point.

III. Dialog Creation. This activity allows for creative expression of the students as they put what they have been practicing to use. Symbols are drawn on the board to suggest phrases that are elicited from the students to create a dialog involving requests for schedule information. The symbols may suggest viable alternate phrases to different students so that more than one dialog may result.

There should be at least one such activity in the lesson plan presented to the participants. The criteria for CBE/ESL instructional activities should be referred to as the activities are discussed.

IV. Pronunciation. Pronunciation is often a problem for students, and how to integrate it into a lesson is often a problem for the teacher. However, pronunciation contrasts can be found that relate to the tasks identified as student needs. These contrasts should be used as a basis for pronunciation lessons for the corresponding instructional units whenever feasible.

V. Homework. Not all teachers can expect their adult students to do work at home. This particular activity could be used as a review activity for the following session. Notice that this activity prepares students to meet the requirements of the performance objective.

Note and Evaluate Competency. These notations at the end of the lesson serve as a reminder of what the students are being prepared to do.

LESSON PLAN

Competency: Students will be able to use a bus schedule.

Functions	Structure	Materials
Ask and answer requests for information Ask for clarification Inquire about possibility	Present real Conditional	English for Adult Competency, Book 1, pp. 71-72 Bus schedules Transparency for dialog Overhead projector

I. Announcements/Review

Trip to National Air and Space Museum, Thursday, 9:30-12:00.

EAC, pp. 71-72--pair practice of dialogs.

II. Bus Schedules

Route 38A--give one to each student.
Ask questions about info on outside.
Look at map.
Look at weekday schedule--discuss.

What time will you get to Rosslyn if you take the 6:08 bus?

Drill conditions, pair practice.

III. Dialog Creation

Elicit dialog from students.

IV. Pronunciation: l/r

late/rate
long/wrong
light/right
lane/rain
lice/rice
fly/fry
tile/tire

V. Homework

- Give students a choice of one from five different bus schedules.
- Students are to write questions (5) about the bus schedule to ask fellow students.

NOTE: TOMORROW--small group work, students with same schedules to ask each other their questions.

Evaluate Competency. Given a bus schedule for a local route, students will be able to report to the class on departure and arrival times, length of trip, and number of stops.

INSTRUCTIONS--REVIEW ACTIVITY D

Performance Objective: Having chosen a competency and using any materials, participants will develop at least two instructional activities which will enable their students to achieve the competency. They should include a rationale for selecting these activities.

Participants are asked to choose a competency for which they will write at least two appropriate instructional activities. You may give them a list of competencies from which to choose* or have them write their own.

It is important that participants give their rationale for the activities they have planned. They should refer to the Criteria for CBE/ESL Activities (D/6), and identify the criteria which have been met.

Participants should be evaluated on the following:

- Communicative nature of the activity
- Appropriateness of the language taught to the competency
- Rationale for choosing the activity, including criteria

---

*Students will be able to make a telephone call for emergency help.
Students will be able to interpret clothing care labels.
Students will be able to participate in a job interview.
Students will be able to describe problems in their house/apartment.

REVIEW ACTIVITY D

Competency: Participants will be able to design effective CBE instruction for the accomplishment of class competencies.

Choose one competency and write at least two instructional activities that will enable your students to achieve the competency. Include what information the students will be given before they begin the activity, what language function/structure will be focused on, and what materials, if any, will be used. Write your rationale for selecting these activities, keeping in mind the criteria for CBE/ESL instructional activities.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

MODULE _____

DATE _____

How do you rate this workshop?

_____Poor _____Fair _____Good _____Very Good _____Excellent

Which aspect of the workshop was most valuable to you?

Which aspect of the workshop was least valuable to you?

What suggestions do you have for improving the training?

Other comments:

MODULE E

EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Competency

Participants will be able to evaluate student performance.

Rationale

In CBE, evaluation serves to certify that students have achieved the competencies that have been set for them. The students receive feedback on how they are doing, and the teacher receives feedback on the effectiveness of instruction.

Recording students' achievement builds confidence and motivation as the students see their inventory of skills grow. It also fosters the support of the community and funding sources by providing documentation of progress within the ESL program.

Performance Objective

Having chosen a competency and performance objective, participants will design an activity which can be used to measure student mastery of that competency.

Enabling Objectives

Will describe the reasons for evaluation.

Will identify alternate ways to evaluate student performance.

EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE: BACKGROUND NOTES

Why Evaluate?

Evaluation is an integral part of competency-based education. Through evaluation we certify that our students have mastered the competencies that have been set for them. It provides feedback to the students on their progress. Their confidence and motivation increase as they see their inventory of skills grow. It also provides feedback to the teacher on the effectiveness of instruction. Adjustments can be made in the program to ensure that the needs of the students are being met. Evaluation records that chart student progress encourage the continued support of the community and funding sources. Such documents provide evidence that a program is fulfilling its mission to enable the students to function proficiently in society.

What Are We Going to Test?

First and foremost, we are going to test the ability of the students to complete a task that has been specified for them, based on a needs assessment. In the ESL class, we will also be looking at communication--what can the students, as speakers, readers, or writers, achieve through language. We consider the quality of performance--getting the job done so that it would be acceptable to a native speaker (criterion-referenced testing)--rather than a quantity of performance--a certain percentage of acceptale answers on a test (norm-referenced testing). In other words, our concern is interaction in real-life situations. This implies that testing conditions will take into consideration fluency, context, richness of vocabulary, ability to make authentic responses and to sustain or change direction in conversation, and the unpredictability of listener/reader reaction as students are evaluated on task completion.

How Are We Going to Test?

Conventional tests rarely address interaction in real-life situations, the essence of CBE. Evaluation in CBE is built in if we have carefully written competencies so that they specify expected student behavior (performance) related to role-relevant tasks. If a competency has been expanded into a performance objective, stating conditions and criteria, achievement will be even easier to document. The performance objective serves as a guide in developing evaluation activities.

Actual performance in a real-life situation would be the ideal measure of competency. This is not always possible within the confines of the classroom. However, we can set up the next best thing, which is a simulation of such a situation. Competencies requiring oral/aural use of language can be evaluated through role plays, cued responses, or demonstration. For example, a competency may require that students be able to make an emergency phone call. Each student could pick a card which describes an emergency situation and then use a telephone trainer to call for appropriate assistance. The teacher could act as operator while evaluating student performance. For competencies requiring performance in a post office, supermarket, department store, or office, the whole classroom could be turned into that setting. Students might be required to perform specific tasks at various "counters" staffed by fellow students or volunteer aides, while the teacher circulates to evaluate individuals on their ability to complete the assigned task. Roles could rotate among the students until all have had a chance to demonstrate their competency.

Competencies requiring writing or reading may be evaluated in a paper and pencil format. It is possible to write items that test the ability of students to read newspaper ads and product labels. Shown a medicine bottle label like the one below, students might be asked to answer several questions about it: (1) What is the name of the patient? (2) How often should she take this medicine? (3) Where was this medicine bought?

MEDI-DRUG

421 White Street
424-9781

No: 47356 5/29/84
Dr: Johnson

Mary Wilkens
Take one capsule 3 times a day until finished.

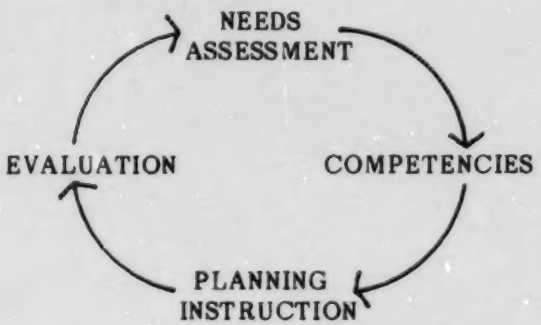
Penicillin 250 mg.

A series of items could be written up in traditional testing format--fill in the blanks, multiple choice, or short answer--and given to all the students at the same time. This would present a more formal testing situation and the students should be aware beforehand that they are being evaluated.

It is important for students to know how they are doing. After the needs assessment and before instruction, students should be given a list of the competencies that they will be working toward. As students achieve a competency, that skill can be checked off. The students can be rated on a can do/can't do yet basis. If language is a concern along with content, a simple scale can be applied that rates students as 0--can't do task, 1--can do task, 2--can do task, structurally correct.

Students may also be asked to rate themselves as part of the learning process. Making reliable evaluations of their own effectiveness in communication situations will assist students in realistically assessing their own needs and desires. This also gives the teacher information about how students view their level of competence.

Evaluation appears to be the final step in the CBE process, but it actually opens the way for the cycle to begin again. If the students have not mastered the competencies set for them, we must assess why not and revise our plan to enable them to achieve those competencies. If they have mastered the competencies, we assess for the next steps toward meeting the individual goals of the students as they work for self-sufficiency in the target society. The CBE process continues.



EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE RESOURCES

Brumfit, C. J., and Johnson, K. The Communicative Approach to Language Teaching.

California Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) Project, 3249 Fordham Street, San Diego, CA 92110.

son, Nicholas, ed. Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults: Methodology.

Finnochiaro, Mary, and Brumfit, Christopher. The Functional-Notional Approach from Theory to Practice.

Ilyin, Donna, and Tragardh, Thomas. Classroom Practices in Adult ESL.

Littlewood, William. Communicative Language Teaching.

Oskarsson, M. Approaches to Self-Assessment in Foreign Language Learning.

Savignon, Sandra J., and Berns, Maggie S., eds. Initiatives in Communicative Teaching.

SUGGESTED FORMAT: MODULE E

EVALUATION

Approx. Time	Activity	Handouts
5 min.	Participants read competencies.	E/1: Competencies
10 min.	Elicit from participants the reasons for evaluation, filling in any that are missed.	
10 min.	Discuss what is going to be tested--achievement of the competencies using the language studied.	
10 min.	Elicit examples of activities that can be used for evaluation. Note that they should meet the same criteria as for instructional activities. Discuss when to evaluate and how to record achievement.	E/2: Evaluation Recording Forms
40 min.	Demonstrate various activities that can be used to evaluate specific competencies. Show how each activity meets the conditions, performance, and criteria specified in the performance objective. (Good sources for activities are found in the resource list for this module.)	E/3: Evaluating Student Achievement E/4: Sample Evaluation Activities
10 min.	BREAK	
1 hr. 15 min.	Final Activity, which includes review activity E: See instructions E/5.	E/5: Final Activity
15 min.	Workshop Evaluation and Series Evaluation	E/6: Workshop Evaluation E/7: Series Evaluation

MODULE E

EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Competency

Participants will be able to evaluate student performance.

Rationale

In CBE, evaluation serves to certify that students have achieved the competencies that have been set for them. The students receive feedback on how they are doing, and the teacher receives feedback on the effectiveness of instruction.

Recording students' achievement builds confidence and motivation as the students see their inventory of skills grow. It also fosters the support of the community and funding sources by providing documentation of progress within the ESL program.

Performance Objective

Having chosen a competency and performance objective, participants will design an activity which can be used to measure student mastery of that competency.

Enabling Objectives

Will describe the reasons for evaluation.

Will identify alternate ways to evaluate student performance.

INSTRUCTIONS--SAMPLE EVALUATION RECORDING FORMS

Two sample formats are included on the handout. Sample A records the evaluations for an entire class. The advantage to this format is that the teacher can see at a glance who needs additional instruction in what areas. The major disadvantage is that the students have no record of their own of their progress. Individual evaluations could be transferred to separate sheets at the end of a unit or term to provide such information.

Sample B records the evaluation of an individual student. This form may be shown to the students before instruction begins so they know what is expected of them. The advantage of this format is that the students will have a record of their own progress at the end of the unit or term. The disadvantage is that a separate sheet is needed for each student, making recording cumbersome for the teacher.

SAMPLE EVALUATION RECORDING FORMS

Key: 0 - can't do task
1 - can do task
2 - can do, structural accuracy

SAMPLE A

	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name	Name
Personal Identification						
Differentiate first and last names						
Spell name						
Fill out data forms						
Introduce self and others						
Housing						
Identify rooms and furniture						
Name repair person to contact						

SAMPLE B

Student _____

Teacher _____

		0	1	2
Transportation	Use bus schedule to report routes, times, fares			
	Identify traffic signs			
	Use grid map to follow directions			
	Use grid map to give directions			
Health	Describe illness/injury			
	Make a doctor's appointment			

Teacher's comments

Student's signature _____ Date _____

EVALUATING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

What are we testing?

- Achievement of the competencies using the language taught
- Interaction in real-life situations

How Are We Going to Test?

- Tests should be behavior-based according to the performance specified in the competency.
- The best way to test: performance in real life. The next best way is the classroom: simulation.
- Reading and writing may be evaluated through paper and pencil tests.
- Oral communication should be tested through oral activities. Examples:
  (1) Describe a situation, ask students what they would say.
  (2) Give statement, student must respond.
  (3) Line dialog with cue cards.
  (4) Ask students to complete a dialog.
  (5) Role play.

Recording Student Achievement

- Checklist of competencies: students can or cannot perform the task. This may be completed by the student as well as by the teacher.
- Language use: devise a simple scale: 0--can't do task; 1--can do it; or 2--can do it, structurally correct.

INSTRUCTIONS--SAMPLE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

The samples demonstrate how a reading competency (interpret clothing care labels) can be evaluated at three different levels. Many other examples for evaluating reading and writing competencies can be found in the CASAS sample items booklet, which is available from:

Patricia Rickard
CASAS Project
3249 Fordham Street
San Diego, CA 92110

SAMPLE EVALUATION ACTIVITIES

SAMPLE A

1. What does this label mean?

DRY CLEAN ONLY

A. Wash it by hand.
B. Iron it.
C. Take it to the cleaners.
D. Wash it in water.

SAMPLE B

Directions: Study the clothing labels to answer the next two questions.

SLACKS

MACHINE WASH SEPARATELY

BLOUSE

HAND WASH, DRIP DRY

SHIRT

HAND WASH IN COLD WATER, HANG DRY

SWEATER

DRY CLEAN ONLY

1. Which labels tell you to wash the clothing by hand?

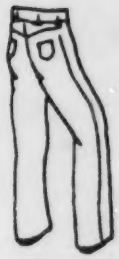
   A. Slacks and blouse
   B. Slacks and shirt
   C. Blouse and shirt
   D. Sweater and shirt

2. Which garment should you take to the cleaners?

   A. Slacks
   B. Blouse
   C. Sweater
   D. Shirt

Sample C

Directions: Study the clothing labels to answer the next two questions.



SLACKS

MACHINE WASH SEPARATELY. TUMBLE DRY. PRESS WITH WARM IRON IF NEEDED.

SHIRT

PERMANENT PRESS. MACHINE WASHABLE IN WARM WATER. TUMBLE DRY. REMOVE PROMPTLY. PRESS WITH COOL IRON IF NEEDED.

BLOUSE

DRY CLEAN ONLY. DO NOT STEAM OR PRESS.

SWEATER

HAND WASH IN COLD WATER. DO NOT WRING. DRY FLAT.

1. Which label tells you to remove the the garment from the dryer

   A. Slacks
   B. Shirt
   C. Blouse
   D. Sweater

2. Which label tells you not to wash the garment with other clothes?

   A. Slacks
   B. Shirt
   C. Blouse
   D. Sweater

These sample items are from the California Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and Continuing Education, San Diego Community College District. Information on CASAS Life Skills Tests and other materials is available by contacting Patricia Rickard, CASAS Project, 3249 Fordham Street, San Diego, CA 92110.

INSTRUCTIONS--FINAL ACTIVITY

Note: This activity incorporates Review Activity E.

Overall Performance Objective

Participants will demonstrate their understanding of the application of competency-based education in the adult ESL classroom by choosing a student need and writing an instructional plan which will enable students to meet that need. This plan will include:

- a statement of need
- a competency to be mastered
- a performance objective describing how mastery will be demonstrated
- linguistic and other skills to be learned
- instructional activities leading to achievement of the competency
- an evaluation activity to be used to measure achievement of the competency

This final activity gives participants an opportunity to tie together the five modules through the development of a lesson plan. They can use any format with which they feel comfortable as long as they fulfill the requirements of the activity.

Lesson plans should be evaluated on the appropriateness of

- the need
- the competency
- the performance objective
- the linguistic/other skills being taught
- the instructional activities used
- the evaluation activity

FINAL ACTIVITY

(**Note:** This activity incorporates Review Activity E. Competency: Participants will be able to evaluate students' performance.)

Goal: Participants will be able to apply competency-based education in their adult ESL classrooms.

Review the needs of your students and choose one need around which you will develop a plan of instruction which will enable your students to meet that need. The plan should include the following:

- a statement of need
- a competency that is the expression of that need
- a performance objective describing how mastery will be demonstrated
- linguistic and other skills to be learned
- instructional activities leading to achievement of the competency
- an evaluation activity to be used to measure performance/ achievement

Please indicate knowledge and skills pertinent to this need that students have already mastered if such information will clarify your plan.

WORKSHOP EVALUATION

MODULE _____

DATE _____

How do you rate this workshop?

____Poor ____Fair ____Good ____Very Good ____Excellent

Which aspect of the workshop was most valuable to you?

Which aspect of the workshop was least valuable to you?

What suggestions do you have for improving the training?

Other comments:

CBE/ESL WORKSHOP SERIES

Series Evaluation

1. Overall, how would you rate the Workshop Series in terms of its value to you?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

2. Overall, how would you rate the Workshop Series in terms of its organization?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor				Excellent

3. How would you rate each module in terms of quality?

A. CBE and the Adult Learner	1	2	3	4	5
B. Needs Assessment and Language Functions	1	2	3	4	5
C. Writing Competency-Based Objectives	1	2	3	4	5
D. Planning Instruction	1	2	3	4	5
E. Evaluating Student Performance	1	2	3	4	5

4. My expectations which were fulfilled were _____

_____

5. My expectations which were not fulfilled were _____

_____

6. What I found most helpful was _____

7. What I found least helpful was _____

8. As a result of these workshops, I _____

9. What suggestions do you have for future CBE/ESL workshops?
   - A. Number of workshops _____
   - B. Length of each workshop _____
   - C. Methods used _____
   - D. Other _____

10. Any other comments?

APPENDIX

SAMPLE CBE SURVEY

As you go down this list of items, we'd like you to think about each one in four ways: (A) how important it is to you, (B) how much you know about it, (C) how often you put it into practice, and (D) whether or not it is a feature of competency-based education.

The first three categories are ranked on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being lowest and 5 being highest (1 = not important, no knowledge, not practiced). In the fourth category, CBE, 1 = Yes, 2 = No, and 3 = Not Sure.

Please circle one number under each category.

	Importance	Knowledge	Practice	CBE
				Y N NS
1. Plan activities which provide real-life communication	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
2. Write objectives for each unit of instruction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
3. Allow students to move through material at own pace	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
4. Use materials which allow for open entry/open exit	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
5. Give students continuous feedback on their progress	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
6. Involve students in determining class content	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
7. Plan student-centered instruction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
8. Use a variety of teaching methods/techniques	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
9. Assess students' needs and goals before planning instruction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
10. Measure student progress	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
11. Provide individualized or personalized instruction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
12. Tell students what they are supposed to learn at the start of a lesson	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
13. Plan group activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
14. Use students' interests when planning instruction	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
15. Use materials which provide activities based on students' everyday lives	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
16. Provide extra work for fast students	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
17. Plan experiences outside the classroom	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3
18. Provide remedial work for slow students	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3

Name _____ County where you work _____

Day Telephone _____

OBTAINING CREDIT

The University of Virginia grants Continuing Education Units or credit for courses providing more than 10 contact hours of instruction. The trainer may wish to apply for credit for the participants of the CBE/ESL Workshops. The awarding of credit is subject to approval by the University of Virginia and is not guaranteed. However, this manual contains all the program course information required to be submitted when applying for credit:

- rationale for the course
- objectives of the course
- methodology
- assignments
- measure of progress

Academic credentials of the trainer must also be submitted:

- academic and professional experience, form provided by the University
- resume or vita
- two letters of reference
- unofficial undergraduate and graduate transcripts.

In the Northern Virginia area, credit is sometimes granted to individuals through independent study under the University of Virginia Masters program in Social Foundations of Education.

For additional information, contact the University of Virginia regional office nearest you.

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P. O. Box 3697 UVA
Charlottesville, VA 22903

Falls Church Regional Center UVA
2990 Telestar Court
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Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Lynchburg Regional Center UVA
240-A Tarkington Building
2600 Memorial Avenue
Lynchburg, VA 24501

Richmond Regional Center UVA
4907 Augusta Avenue
Richmond, VA 23230

Roanoke Regional Center UVA
2103 Electric Road, S. W.
Roanoke, VA 24018

Southwest Virginia Regional Center UVA
100 Court Street
Abingdon, VA 24210

RESOURCES FOR CBTE

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